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 Poems

MEDLEY AND PALESTINA

BY
J. W. DEFOREST

AUTHOR OF THE DOWNING LEGENDS, A LOVER'S REVOLT, PLAYING THE
MISCHIEF, JUSTINE'S LOVERS, KATE BEAUMONT, OVERLAND,
THE WETHERELL AFFAIR, HONEST JOHN VANE,
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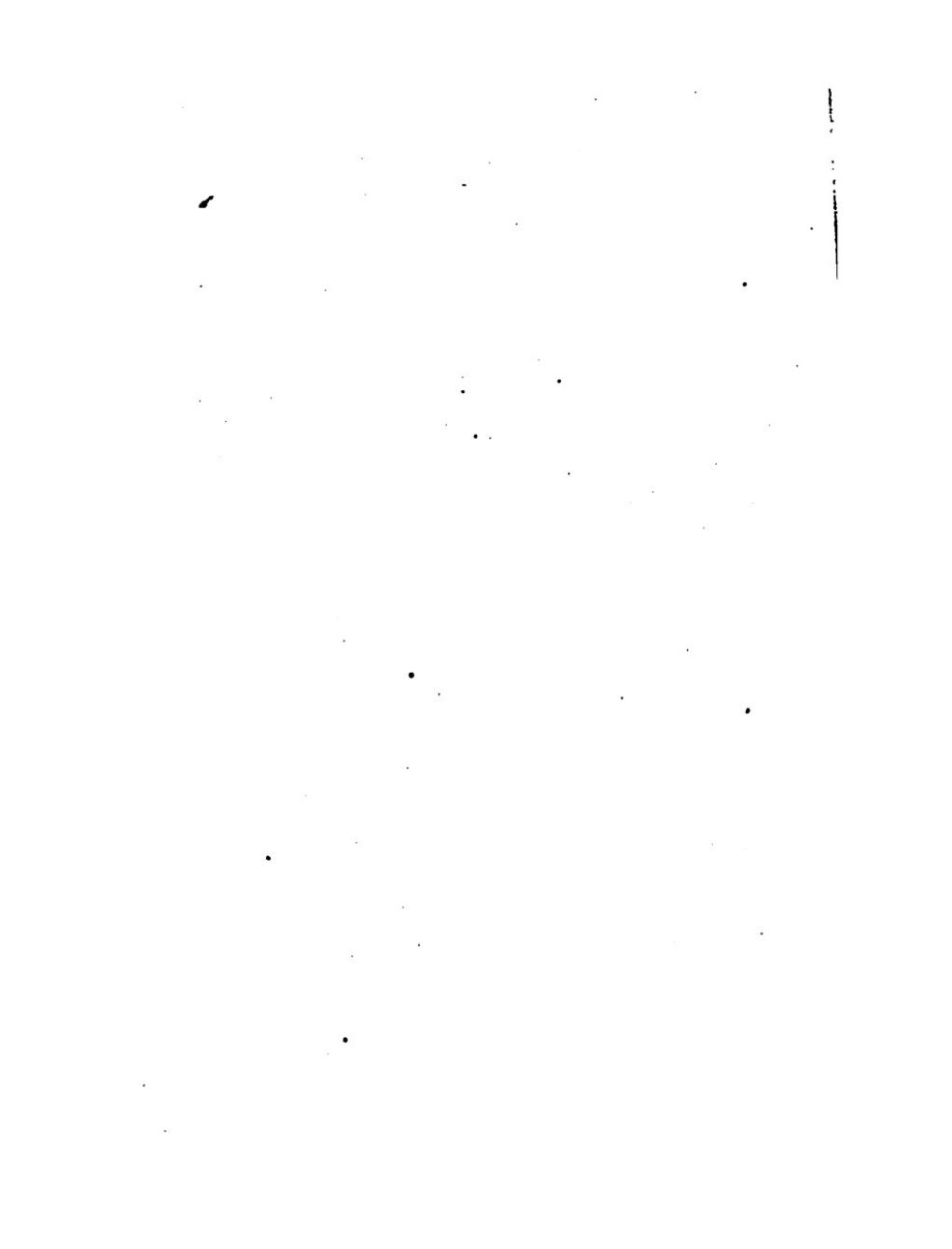
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PREFACE

UNDER THE COLORS.

Counting service in war and in peace, I was six and a half years under the colors. I was in three storming parties, six days of field engagement, and thirty-seven days of siege duty, making forty-six days under fire.

My chief regret with regard to this matter is that I could not take part in one of the greater battles, such as Gettysburg or Chickamauga. I am not only glad, but I am sincerely thankful that I did not miss Port Hudson and the final victories in the Shenandoah Valley. In the finishing fight there I was on the staff of General Emory, carrying various orders for him and one for General Sheridan.

In "Under the Colors" there are souvenirs of several of my fighting days. "The Combat" refers to the engagement of Labadieville, or Georgia Landing, in Louisiana. "Forward" was suggested by an incident of Banks' first attempt to carry Port Hudson. "The Storming Column" sketches the night assault of June 19th, on the same fortress. "The Bloody Grove" is a recollection of a sanguinary struggle for a little woodland during Sheridan's battle of The Opequan. "Lost and Won" narrates a small part of what I saw in the famous fight of Cedar Creek.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REVERIES.

"The Phantom Ship" sketches the famous Palatine Light of Block Island, as it appeared to myself. In order to show it as it has appeared to other and more gifted eyes, I copy here some of the testimony which I took down from the lips of an insular witness.

"I was a-rakin seaweed, 'bout midnight," said Mr. J. Ball, "when I seed the Palatine a-comin' straight for the pynt, an' I couldn't see nobody on deck, but she were bark-rigged. I run up to the lighthouse to call two men as were sleepin' there, but before we got to the pynt she struck the rocks an' went to pieces."

"Nuther time," continued Mr. Ball, "some o' our folks (I expec' they'd been drinkin a bit) was comin' from New London by night in a boat, when they met the Palatine in the chan'l, an' she kep' a straight course, an' they had to sheer off for her."

Here Mr. Ball closed his statement, not, I think, because there was no more to tell, but because he ran short of language wherewith to tell it. I submit that the above narrations bear strong internal proof that the man who narrated them believed them. I believe them also, with certain abatements. There is a Palatine Light, or at least there *was* one formerly, and I have seen it as sure as J. Ball. For a faithful, cold-blooded, scientific description of its appearance and behavior, I refer the reader to my verses entitled "The Phantom Ship."

To me (not being a seafaring man) the Light did not look like a vessel, whether bark-rigged or otherwise. It rather resembled a wheatsheaf, made of silvery

aurora borealis, about half a mile high and ten miles away, drifting rapidly seaward along the wide channel between Block Island and Newport. Every few minutes it toppled forward, went completely under the water-line, and then reappeared miles further east, with a preliminary glow like that of the moon rising from a marine horizon. Through the broad, hazy base shone the tiny lanterns of fishing-smacks, and also the huge, staring beacons (a red and a green) of two coasting steamers, allying the extravagant apparition to our workaday world and helping the human spectator to believe himself awake and in his sober wits.

I watched the Light for thirty minutes or more, in company with a dozen other seasiders, all fascinated and puzzled. At that time Whittier's fine poem about it was to me completely unknown. I had heard of the *Palatine*, however, and promptly divined her in the sight before me. My own verses were written the next day at Block Island, and appeared not long afterward in "*Harper's Monthly*."

PALESTINA.

I have not attempted to settle the chronology of the Hebrew writings known as *The Prophets*. Nor have I attempted to distinguish, in their matter, between what is history, what is denunciation or imprecation, and what is prophesy. I have written as a poet, or as a minor minstrel, whichever I may be.

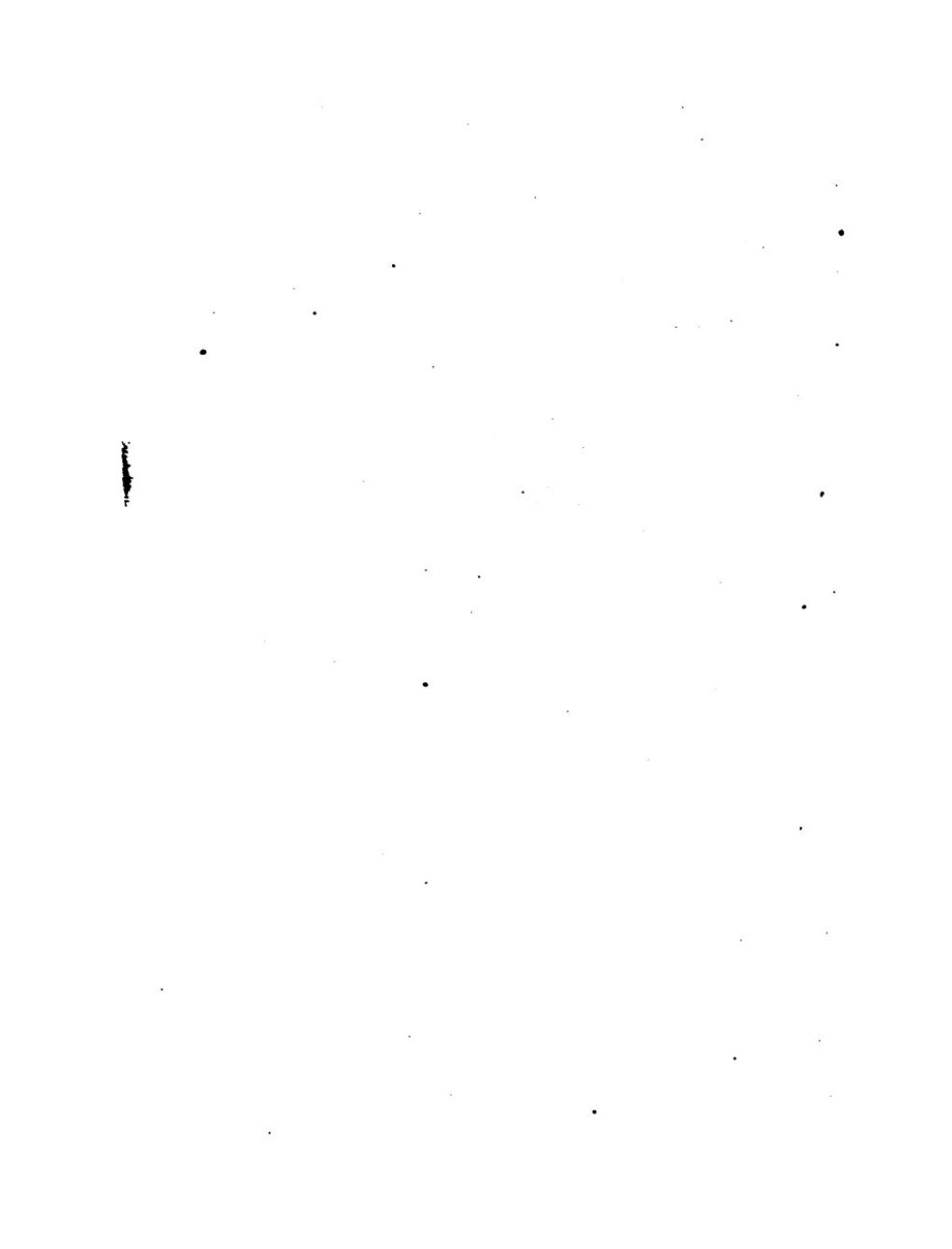
As to measure, or stanza, I have had no theory or pre-established purpose, but have simply accepted what-

ever might be suggested to my ear by some guiding phrase of the original, meaning thereby the English version. If my admiration for this original does not appear in my fragmentary renderings of it, then I have failed to express myself distinctly.

With regard to the battle on Mt. Gilboa, it will be noted that I have supposed it to be something like the Homeric battles. It seems fairly certain that "the lords of the Philistines" were an invading race from Crete, consisting partly of "well-greaved Achaeans," such as fought against Troy under Agamemnon, not far from the period of the glorious death of Saul.

Another superb ending of an Israelitish chieftain is the death scene of Ahab, concealing his mortal wound for fear of discouraging his army, and having himself held up till evening in his blood-stained chariot.

UNDER THE COLORS



UNDER THE COLORS



MEDLEY AND PALESTINA

MEDLEY

UNDER THE COLORS.

THE BATTALION.

A thousand strong we marched to battle;
The city roared around the host;
The tambours blared their vaunting rattle;
The bugles yelled their joyous boast.

No thought had we to die asunder,
Companions sworn, a brother throng;
We looked to sweep through battle's thunder
In mighty lines, a thousand strong.

But ah, the fever's poisoned arrow!
The jungle's breath! the summer's glow!
Our broad array grew swiftly narrow,
And scanty hundreds met the foe.

O fervid longings, thoughts and fancies
That tread the city of the soul,
How few of all your spirit-lances
Arrive where glory's trumpets roll!

THE COMBAT.

Without a ripple stretched the plain;
For months we had not seen a hill;
The endless, hot savannah still
Fatigued the eye with waving cane.

A jungly forest lay before,
(The ambush of the wary foe);
In front, a stagnant sluice with low,
Reed-bordered, spongy, inky shore;

Along the right a mildewed swamp
Where alligators slept or crawled,
And pallid cypress-titans sprawled,
And mosses drooped their funeral pomp;

While leftward crept a dull lagoon,
As black as Charon's woful tide,
With plains beyond it blistering wide
Beneath the white-hot gleam of noon.

Gray, fitful spits of musketry
Announced our skirmishers at work;
We saw their darkling figures lurk
In thickets, firing from the knee.

Our cannon searched the distant wood
With humming, shrieking, cracking shell,
When suddenly the mouth of hell
Reclaimed its polyphemic food.

Menacing ghosts of whirling smoke
Arose a hundred yards ahead,
And deadly storms of hissing lead
From rifle-pit and canefield broke.

Then, while the bullets whistled shrill
And hidden batteries boomed and growled,
“Make ready! Aim!” the colonel howled;
“Battalion, forward! Fire at will!”

Right on against the foeman’s wold,
With eager, gladsome, deafening fire
And whoops that keened each moment **higher**,
The dark-blue, living billow rolled.

The color-guard was at my side;
I heard the giant sergeant groan;
I heard the bullet crush the bone;
I might have touched him as he died.

I had no malice in my mind;
I only cried, “Close up! Guide right!”
My single purpose through the fight
Was quick advance with ranks aligned.

The foemen rose, then turned and fled;
A loosened, grey-clad multitude
Receded, vanished ’mid the wood,
And left us smiling o’er the dead.

Again the march, the endless plain,
The father-river hedged in dykes;
Gray cypresses, palmetto spikes,
Bayou and swamp and yellowing cane;

With rare plantations, richly spelled
In blooms, bananas, orange groves,
Where laugh the sauntering negro droves,
Reposing from the task of eld;

And, rarer, half-deserted towns,
Devoid of men, where women spit
Their helpless hate, and sidling flit
With writhing scowl and flouting gowns;

But everywhere, 'mid toils and scorns,
A noble sense of honor won,
A nobler sense of duty done,
A crown achieved, though sharp with thorns.

CAMPAIGNING.

I

The war was weary long.
How long and wearisome it was,
That strife 'twixt valiant right and valiant wrong,
'Twixt anarchy and crystallizing laws!
How weary, weary were the marches
In lands where noon tide parches
The pulsing torrents of the veins!
How many steaming plains,
Now ashy waste,
Now thick with honeyed canes,
Our footfalls slowly paced
From glaring rim to rim,
While fever's vipers strayed

Through aching head and limb,
And gnawing hunger preyed
Till e'en that garish land grew dim!
The poison-sucking moons
Hung over black lagoons
And poured their venom through the hazy night;
The dawns were damp with blight,
And all the golden-quivered noons
Shot arrows glowing white
That struck full many down in mortal swoons.

II

Yea, long and fearful was the strife.
How many mighty champions,
How many evil Titans, bounded
From caves of Chaos and Affright
To spend their savage life
In wrestling with the shining ones
Who guard the fortress of the right!
How many cruel clarions sounded
More hortative and loud
Than Roland's trumpet when he bowed
To death in Roncesvale!
I heard all notes that wail
Through battle's vibrant scale.
I heard the dying when they sighed
Like wearied children pitiful and meek;
I heard the wounded when they cried
Their wild, astonished shriek,
The cry of one who feels his pulses fail
And all his strength turn weak

Because beneath him seems to slide
And open swiftly wide
A black and bottomless abyss.

III

I heard the bullet's hiss,
Incessant, sharp and fell,
The keenest, deadliest note
That bursts from battle's throat;
The piercing screech and jarring whirr
Of grape and canister;
And flying from afar, the shell
With changeful, throbbing, husky yell,
A demon tiger, leaping miles
To spread his iron claws
And tear the bleeding files;
While oft arose the charging cry
Of men who battled for a glorious cause
And died when it was beautiful to die.

IV

In long pursuits,
When every blistered footstep seemed to bleed,
When reeling ranks outwore the very brutes
And every furlong showed its dying steed,
How strange, with aching eyes to scan
The flying dust of cavalry,
(The horsemen of our van)
That up and down the roadways ran
Untiringly as billows of the sea,
Retreating and attacking, coming, going,

As wayward as a firefly's glowing,
While here and there
A sabre's glare
Revealed that Death was busy there.
Strange, too, again,
Athwart some scintillating plain,
To see advance through tremulous rays
The solemn, columned haze
Of mighty marchings, visible afar,
The dim afreets of war,
The gliding pillar-clouds of Death's simoom,
The tempest-demons, charged with doom,
That over war's Sahara swarm,
Menacing, monstrous, climbing skies
And hastening to descend in storm
Of crashing ranks and booming batteries.

v

In middle night,
In dewy silence, ocean-deep,
The hundred-pounder on the bastioned height
Awakened from its ponderous sleep
And poured with all its iron might
A lion-like, a grandly solemn roar
That boomed and shuddered on
From horizon to horizon
Until the lofty frame
Of darkness shook from roof to floor.
Then rose the bomb a-sky,
A lurid, crimson, bloody fiend of flame
That mounted swiftly while that awful cry

Along the rocking welkin fled.
It climb, it soared, it curved its flight,
It paused one fearful moment overhead,
A meteor as red as hell;
Then burst in ruins deadly white,
In ghastly shatterings of livid light,
Magnificent, sublime and fell;
While, clanging like a Pandemonic bell,
The great explosion shuddered on
From horizon to horizon;
And once again the monstrous dome of night
Reeled outward from the roar
And shook from awful peak to boundless floor.

VI

Yea, fearful were the sights and sounds
That swept the war's wide bounds.
It seemed at times as though we trod
Another and most fearful world,
Unknown perchance to God,
Or else long since to ruin hurled.
Yet never did our spirit shrink;
We marched and fought with steady heart;
We marched to Hades' brink
Without a coward start.
Our cause was good,
Befitting manhood's noblest mood;
And it was noble, too, to brave
The great unknown beyond the grave.
All this was godlike, worthy all
That we had power to give,

UNDER THE COLORS.

'Though in the giving we should fall
Sore wounded; yea, should cease to live.

FORWARD.

A soldier laid him down to die:
His wound was deep, his life a-failing:
He called a comrade charging by:
The shells were flying, balls a-hailing.

"O brother, take this purse of gold:"
The steeds were rushing, cannon leaping:
"And bear it to my mother old."
His voice was shaken here with weeping.

"O brother," said the comrade then:
The turf was red with blood a-streaming:
"Your errand fits but wounded men:
The bayonets came on a-gleaming.

"I came to fight, and not to fly:
I shall not live to see your mother:
So pray that I may bravely die,
And trust your treasure to another."

THE STORMING COLUMN.

Do you remember the storming column
That Banks sent up one night of June?
Do you recall the grandly solemn
Advance withouten star or moon?
The tangled wood and the boding cry
Of owls that jeered us on to die?

Afar in stifling night we heard
 The picket rattle rise and fall;
Now and then the leaves were stirred
 Above our heads by a random ball;
There were no clamored orders then,
 The orders came from whispering men.

Our road by dark battalions ran,
 By sections harnessed, man and steed;
We heard them croak, "There goes the van";
 And then we knew that we should lead
The battle; but our hearts would roam,
 And many thought, "Adieu to home."

The colonel groped before the files
 Of bayonets bare and sabres drawn;
We roamed and stumbled dusky miles,
 And night had paled to filmy dawn
When yellow earthworks loomed ahead
 And howling battle called our dead.

Then officer and soldier yelled,
 And wildly charged the old brigade;
The hoarse hurrahs one moment quelled
 The rifle crash and cannonade;
I think the very caves of death
 Reechoed that heroic breath.

For the dying shouted as they died,
 Cheering their panting comrades on;
And though the clanging bronze replied,
 They heard it not, for they were gone;

And thus I think their final call
Entered the gates of Odin's hall.

We reached the trench ; our foremost dead
Dotted the smoking mounds with blue ;
The bastions flushed with clotting red,
And still the hissing bullets flew ;
They hailed along the gullied banks
And thinned the wearied, broken ranks.

In vain supporting cannon roared,
In vain renewed battalions pressed ;
The Southern flag triumphant soared,
We could not smoor the flaming crest ;
We could not conquer—could but die.
Yet all the war was a victory.

THE BLOODY GROVE.

The wood was strewn with gray and blue,
The smoke was coiled and looping,
When onward came the foe anew
With shrieking and with whooping.

The cannon tore the leafy aisles,
The beeches flew asunder
And tottered through the scanty files
In plunging, crackling thunder.

We knelt beside the fallen trees,
Beside our fallen brothers,—
We thought of others on their knees,
Of darlings and of mothers.

We glanced aloft and bade farewell
To earth, its joy and beauty;
Then made our every bullet tell
For honor and for duty.

The wood was strewn with dying men,
The turf was red and reeking,
When onward came the foe agen
With whooping and with shrieking.

LOST AND WON.

I

The battle sprang through dingy dawn,
A stealthy battle shod with lawn.
It scared the morning with its leap,
A tiger battle slaying sleep.
One aster pierced the reddening east
And lit the monster to his feast.
From lofty heights that faced our camp
He crept on paws of velvet wiles
Down torrent gulches green and damp,
Up wooded slopes and gray defiles,
Till, stealing round our leftward wing,
He crouched and made his fearful spring.

II

My foot was on the stirrup plate,
My hand was on the saddle bow;
I leaped astride and spurred agate
Through tangled paths to spy the foe.

But vainly might I lean and gaze;
The lanskip showed no living shape.
I saw but woodlands draped in haze;
One foreland groping like a cape
Through pallid gulfs; beyond, a pall
Of tiding mists; and that was all.
But still afar I heard the yell
Of men who conquered, men who fell.

III

Then presently a phantom grove
Disparted wide its filmy aisles;
And through them, half discovered, drove
A drifting swarm of broken files,
Accoutred as they sprang from sleep;
Half vested; herding close, like sheep
In terror; glancing back amazed,
And croaking low, as creatures dazed
By some incredible mischance,
A thrust of magic's fated lance.
In vain were rally calls. They stared
Unanswering, and ever fared
To rearward, stolidly as hosts
Of brutes, and helplessly as ghosts.
So disappeared our shattered van,
And so the daylong fight began,
While downward drove that lurid star
(Red Thor menacing from his car),
And slowly climb in rosy lawn
The unavailing peace of dawn.

IV

Now silence fell—a moment's grace—
An anxious, fearful breathing space—
Like that between two evil dreams,
Two combing waves, two levin gleams,—
The while we swiftly altered form,
Battalions wheeling, swarm by swarm,
The ranks a-shake and intertwined,
The very chieftains groping blind
To meet the coming of a foe
Whose striking-place we could not know,—
A panther-footed foe whose claws
Crept daintily through morning's gauze.

V

Then battle's second billow broke,
With tongues of fire and spouting smoke,
With whirring grape and howling shell,
With yelping, piercing yell on yell.
The cannon-vapor folded high,
The spiteful bullet speeded by,
While back we drifted, ever back,
A bleeding, rifted, reeling wrack,
The field with mangled men bestrown,
With fallen steeds, guns overthrown,
And foul with sprinklings, trails and pools
Of blood, as 'twere a land of ghouls.

VI

Till noon the hurrying foe prevailed,
Nor any stroke of ours availed.
But then! O what a change there was!
He came! the Roland of our cause!
He came! we needed but his glance
To halt, to rally, and advance,
To strike as 'twere a dying blow,
And see the day all laureled go.

O monstrous joy, akin to madness!
O cruel joy, the victor's gladness!
His dearest comrade falls anear;
He rushes on without a tear.
He leaps along the roaring field
And laughs to see the foemen yield.
He faces death's demoniac jaws
And rends the air with gay hurrahs.
No other joy that earth may give,
No other moment man may live,
Outshines the radiant moment whiles
Red victory crowns the weary files.

THE BATTLE FLAG.

I beckon onward charging men,
I head the bleeding rally,
I flaunt along the rattling glen,
Along the booming valley.

I waver through the bloody sedge
That rims the black morasses;

I climb the mountain's smoky ledge
And rive the columned masses.

I span the river's icy flight,
I flout the squadroned horses,
I scale the rampart's steely height
And throb above the corses.

A dozen men have borne my staff,
And, clutching it, have perished;
But still along the war I laugh,
And still my rags are cherished.

I lead my children through the flame,
All marching in their places;
I cheer my darlings on to fame
And kiss their dying faces.

I muster scarce a hundred braves
Beneath my crimsoned glory.
O heroes, forward to your graves,
And plant my pike in story!

THE BOY SOLDIER.

O my sunny
Boy, my beauty,
Mad to strike a blow!
Not for money,
Not for duty
Would I let thee go.

Spare the mother,
 Growing hoary,
Not for long below;
 Let another
Win the glory,
 Rushing on the foe.

Ah, the ruddy
 Soldier laddie,
Waking all aglow!
 What a bloody
Slumber had he
 Ere the sun was low!

Half a city,
 Treading slowly,
Joined the funeral show.
 Grant me pity,
Holy, holy
 Comforter of woe!

AFTER THE WAR.

How few remember now the days,
 The peddling days, before the war,
When life was like a one-horse chaise
 And "thirty cents" a morning star,
When Bunker Hill "descended down"/*
If cotton planters deigned to frown!

* Trumbull's McFingal.

We washed them clean, those scrolls of shame,
In seas of blood. We crossed them off
With powder stain and scorch of flame.
The kings no longer grin and scoff
At Freedom throned on hosts of slaves.
We balanced that with hosts of graves.

O comrades, render thanks to God
For Bull Run's day of panic terrors.
That overthrow was Yahveh's rod
To scourge afar the groveling errors
That trade is manhood's loftiest pride,
And man's most precious part, his hide.

Our fight was nobler for disaster,
No easy stroke were half so grand.
The nation's genius rose the vaster
Because of trial: Our spacious land
Gave narrow scope for such events
As trode its vast circumference.

Glorious braves those rebels were,
As gallant ranks as ever dashed
Up smoking steeps with bayonets bare,
While volleys whizzed and cannon crashed
Athwart the swarms of grey-clad men,—
The memory makes me drop the pen.

I think it might be fine to hear
Their whoop again,—their panther yell:
No trained hurrah, no classic cheer;
But savage yelps of wold and fell;

PICKETT'S CHARGE.

The war had robbed the cradle,
The war had robbed the grave,
And boys with ringlets golden
Bore bayonet and glaive,
And grandsires flung their olden
Thin hair to battle's wave
When Pickett charged the folden
Pale mists where slaughterers rave.

He trode the smitten valley,
The headland's hissing glade,
Right through the bullet tempest,
Right through the cannonade,
Till rank tore rank asunder
With bayonet and blade,
Till earth arose in wonder
To see the death he made.

Six thousand were his heroes,
Three thousand those who bled;
They marched without a shiver
To join the knightly dead;
They crossed the ghostly river
With swift and steady tread;
And fame will shine forever
Around that column's head.

The war had robbed the cradle,
The war had robbed the tomb,
And men whose hair was hoary
And youngsters in their bloom

MEDLEY.

Along the base of the mountain
It streams like a line of spray;
Above, the battery-tempest
Drives billows of curling gray.

I hear the yell of the colonel,
The captain's hurrying call,
The tramp of the panting soldiers,
The ramrod's hammering fall;

The clang of the brass howitzer,
The iron gun's muffled growl,
The thrum of the whirling splinter,
The grapeshot's tigerish howl;

The stunning crash of the volleys,
The longdrawn fire of the files,
The bullet's incessant whistle—
Exultings of death for miles.

And louder than all, and grimmer,
The jubilant charging yell,
The scream of the old battalion
As it storms through battle's hell.

Again the grasses are reddened
With earth's most precious of dies;
The blood of heroes is flowing—
And tears are blinding my eyes.

I waken to hear but only
The summer's warble and hum,
And, stamping in mimic warfare,
An infant beating a drum.

UNDER THE COLORS.

PICKETT'S CHARGE.

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The war had robbed the grave,
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MEDLEY.

Went shouting through the glory
That folds where cannon boom,
When Pickett stormed the gory
Sublimities of doom.

RAVEN VAN Ross.

They say that the Vandals will come.
I would not believe it till now;
But this horrible throbbing and hum
Is the tramp of their march drawing near
And the roll of their barbarous drum.
So let me remember my vow,
And hasten forth, robed for my bier,
To strike at the joy of their cheer,
To strike and leave some one dumb.

My lineage is gentle and old,
And my heart is virginal pure;
My hair is a girl's flossy gold
And my hand is of satiny gloss;
But no heart can more proudly endure
The anguish of honor's red cross;
No hand with the pistol is truer,
And I'll shoot the first Yankee as sure
As my name is Raven Van Ross.

She speeded forth into the night
And spied the dark column anigh;
She stood there in delicate white,
A maiden too lovely to die;

Too precious for aught but the sight
 Of love, and the kiss of his mouth,
And the clasp of his yearning delight;
But maddened by echoes of fight
 And the passionate blood of the South.

She shot. But no death-cry replied.
 The column sent backward no ball.
It trampled on, massive and wide,
 From curbstone to curbstone across,
Dumb, solemn and black as a pall;
 Unknowing that close by its side,
Withdrawn from life's hyssop and gall,
 Heart-broken, death-stricken, lay all
 That remained of Raven Van Ross.*

* An incident (somewhat disguised) of Sherman's entry into Columbia, South Carolina.



**RECOLLECTIONS AND
REVERIES**



RECOLLECTIONS AND REVERIES.

THE PHANTOM SHIP.

We stood on the haunted island,
We stood by the haunted bay;
The stars were all over the skyland,
But the moon had loitered away.

The lights of fisher-boats glimmered,
The beacon was steady and red,
The harbor icily shimmered
Like the bodeful eye of the dead.

Then came the terror of ocean,
The fiend of the island came,
A vessel with ghostlike motion,
A bark with canvass of flame.

It shone with vaporous brightness,
A glamour of tremulous rays;
It was not fire, but the whiteness
Of a ghost of a perished blaze.

We watched it with wondering vision,
We watched it doubting and dumb;
We had heard of the thing with derision,
But we surely beheld it come.

We saw it glide o'er the water,
A phantom of pallid fire;

We saw it tumble and totter
To ruin, and then flash higher.

Again and again to leeward,
Its ghastly rigging fell o'er;
At last, far away to seaward,
It foundered and rose no more.

We had watched it with straining vision,
We had watched it with eye and glass;
But gone were doubt and derision,
For surely we saw it pass.

Through many a winter and summer,
As the sons of the island know,
The gleam of this vampyre comer
Has prophesied storm and woe:

This ghost of a great three-master
That went in the days of yore
To fell and fiery disaster
Right off the Block Island shore.

THE CITY OF SOULS.

I traverse the humdrum station,
I enter the well-known street;
But a bedlamite incantation
Transfigures the crowds I meet.

Their bodily shapes have vanished
To pallid planets of gholes;
And the city of earth, astonished,
Beholds a people of souls.

Nor neighbor I see, nor brother,
Nor lover nor foe I ken:
And they know not one the other,
These phantom women and men.

For many once quaint and homely
Outglitter the saints themselves,
And many once tall and comely
Are dwarfish and weird as elves.

And many who chided revel
Discover the lurking beast;
And the leer of the doubting devil
Supplants the smile of the priest.

The worshipped and trusted maiden,
The friend of my bosom, come;
But the darling would ruin Aidenn,
The friend is a scowling gnome.

I scout them in fierce derision,
Responses of fiends blaspheme;
Then in anger I rend the vision
And trust in men as they seem.

THE OWL.

All day he sits in his vitreous dome
On the mantel stand of the hotel hall,
And stares at naught like a scornful gnome,
Regardless of me, and thee, and all,
Though many pass him with gleesome feet,
And many whose hearts in agony beat.

Summoning bells on the under floor,
Hurrying steps on the creaking stair,
Sobbing farewells and a mellow roar
Of music and mirth in the evening air,
Burial trains from the floors above,
Shouts of anger and whispers of love,

Succeed and reply like the fateful mell
Of comings and goings and joys and woes
That rave through Life's titanic hotel
To the far Beyond no traveler knows,
Arriving unknown—departed, forgot ;—
One leaving a name—another, a blot.

Yet nothing seemeth the owl to care,
A demon cruelly deaf and blind
To every passionate hope and despair
And gladness and grief of humankind,
Who never changes his stony gaze
While daylight glows or the gasbeaks blaze.

A whitefaced clock in a varnished case,
(A corpse a-stare through a coffin slide)
Tolls the knell of the minutes that chase
Each other to death over eventide.
One! two! three! cries the sexton clock,
And the owl awakes at the magian shock.

He flutters down from his mossy bough;
His eyes are awful with weird surmise;
He cleaves the crystal, I know not how,
And rambles forth on a strange emprise,

Silently treading the carpeted floors
Where sentinel boots guard bedroom doors.

From every keyhole a wraith appears
And tells the soul of the sleeper within,
His secretest longings and plots and fears,
His holiest worth and foulest sin.
The grim fowl harkens with eyes of flame.
No marvel! Who would not harken the same?

At morn he returns, a bewildered bird,
And sits all day in staring amaze,
Thinking unwinking of what he has heard
Of the spirit world and its hidden ways,
Musing entranced till the western sun
Leaves him more puzzled than when he begun.

O, the human heart! O, the human soul!
Enigma of being! conundrum of time!
Go guess me my riddle! The centuries toll
Over guesser and guess their contemptuous chime.
I weary of bowing to college and cowl.
The oracles lie. I shall wait for the owl.

THE TABLEAU VIVANT.

She came in the diademed guise
Of Egypt's bewildering queen;
Apparel of aureate dyes
Lent orient pomp to her mien;
The stars in the heavens of her eyes
Cast magian glamor and sheen.

The smile of astonishment told
How plainly our homage was shown;
The Phidian face glimmered cold,
The face of a goddess in stone;
More regal with beauty than gold,
She needed no sceptre nor throne.

One moment I lived in the past,
Beside her pavilion I bowed,
Or ran to the templed Nile fast
To cheer where her galleon ploughed,
And prayed for the vision to last,
On my knees in a worshipping crowd.

And, maddened, I shouted that well
Might Roman with African strive
And stumble ensanguined to hell,
Yet cease not to grapple and rive
For a queen whose face was a spell,
For the fairest of women alive.

ROMANCES.

I would I were mighty, victorious,
A monarch of steel and of gold;
I would I were one of the glorious
Divinities hallowed of old,
A god of Olympian fashion
Who mingled with women and men,
A deity human in passion,
Transhuman in strength and in ken.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REVERIES.

For then I could render the pleasure
I win from the sight of your face;
For then I could utter my treasure
Of homage and thanks for your grace;
I could dower, illumine and gladden,
Could rescue from peril and tears,
And my speech could vibrate and madden
With eloquence worthy your ears.

You meet me; your greeting is kindly;
One minute I marvel and gaze,
Idolatrous, worshipping blindly,
Yet mindful of decorous ways.
You pass; and the glory is ended,
Though lustre and taper may glow;
The goddess who made the night splendid
Has vanished; and darkly I go.

You know not how quickly you mounted
The throne in the depths of my eyes;
You care not how meekly I counted
Those moments for pearls of the skies;
Or, knowing it, all is forgotten
The instant I fade from your sight,
Consigned to the visions begotten
Of chaos and slumber and night.

But I, I remember your glances,
Your chariest gesture and word,
And out of them fashion romances
Man never yet uttered nor heard,

Romances too brilliant for mortals,
Too glad for a planet of dole,
Romances that open the portals
Of Eden and welcome my soul.

HAIL, AUGUSTA!

Undeserving to woo her, to win her,
I creep far below her and gaze
As up-gazes a vision-rapt sinner
To seraphim shining through haze.
Shall I grovel unworthy forever?
Ah no! I will fight for my heart.
Let me grapple some dizzy endeavor
And mount where she glitters apart.

Shall I seek the sun-fleeces of Jason
And scatter their gold at her feet?
To Atlantis, to Indica hasten
And carve the unknown for her seat?
Shall I foam to the Fortunate Islands,
Or claim Eden's blosoms for us two?
O illusions of earthlands and skylands,
Inspire me to will and to do!

What Titans survive, what undying
Medusas, to challenge to fame?
What habergeoned destinies crying
Hortations to battle and flame?
What achievement, what knighthood remaineth
To one who is panting for worth?
Love repineth and wildly complaineth
That perils have vanished from earth.

I would drape her in purple befitting,
Enthrone her and give her a crown,
In the world-coliseum high-sitting,
To regally smile and look down;
Her illumining arms marble-folded,
A thousand keen stars in her eyes,
And the face that a demigod moulded
Uplifted for human surprise;

Around her the terror and glory,
The laurels and blood of the scene;
Eager visages, story on story,
All turning to her as their queen;
While, allotted to perish before her,
Unchanging in color and breath,
I clamor, "All hail! Thy adorer
Salutes thee, and hastens to death."

THE ARCHER'S PLEA.

You wouldn't shoot with me, Edith,
When the heavens were argent and blue;
And now that the showers are falling,
Edith Anerly, what will you do?

To linger at breakfast and dinner,
To trifle a novelette through,
To walk in the porches with Leila,
Will that be sufficient for you?

The evening will come with its music
And feet dropping gently as dew;
Perhaps with the murmurs and throbings
Of a Douglas tender and true.

I hope it will all be delightful,
I trust there'll be nothing to rue,
Although I would gladly have had you
One hour with the target and yew.

The arrows that glint through the matches
Of life, do they all whistle true?
Are they missioned to centre the yellow,
Or even to edge on the blue?

I trust that the shafts of your drawing
Will fly as Maid Marian's flew
So truly and duly and nobly
You may not regret that you drew.

But I shall depart and not see it,
Leave here and leave earth before you;
Shall go unregretted, forgotten,
And apart as the Wandering Jew.

So remember, before I have vanished,
To do what alone you may do,
And give me one hour of Diana,
Lithe maid, lovely maid, of the yew.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REVERIES.

THE SKATER.

Along the frozen lake she comes
In linking crescents light and fleet;
The ice-embowered undine hums
A welcome to her fairy feet.

I see the jaunty hat, the plume,
Flit bird-like in the frosty gale,
The cheeks alight with burning bloom,
The dark eyes beaming through the veil.

The eager breath parts coral lips,
The marble neck parts tossing curls,
The witching vesture sways and dips
As round she wheels in rapid whorls.

Men pause and smile to see her go;
They gaze, they smile in pleased surprise;
They ask her name; they long to show
Some silent friendship in their eyes.

She glances not; she passes on;
Her steely footfall quicker rings;
She guesses not the benison
That follows her on noiseless wings.

Smooth be her ways, secure her tread
Along the devious lines of life.
From grace to grace successive led,
A noble maiden, nobler wife!

So much I wish her while she strays
In sylphic dance from shore to shore,
Already fearful lest my gaze
May chance upon her nevermore.

THE SOLO.

I gaze on the painted windows,
The columns ashy and cold,
The frescoed saints in the arches,
The ceiling of azure and gold.

The organ thunders and shudders
Like a monster dying in pain;
The chorus has wailed its parting,
Lamenting, repenting in vain.

Then out of the gloom arises
An angel whose wings are furled
You lift your voice in the solo,
And I fly from a woful world.

I traverse ethereal oceans;
Above me are marvellous skies;
I win the islands of Glory
And the beaches of Paradise.

You guide me, I care not whither
So long as I hear you sing;
Grief dies and toil is forgotten;
Ah, life is a heavenly thing.

Then silence falls like a terror
That blanches the face of mirth;
The solo ends, and I waken
To toil and sorrow and earth.

THE HAUNTED LADY.

You know not, lady, how often
A stranger follows your trace,
Or lies in wait for your coming
To win a sight of your face.

He wanders mute as a phantom
That haunts the populous street,
Yet may not murmur its burden
To those it chances to meet.

He longs, like the ghost, to utter
A sigh, a yearning, a word;
But spells forbid, and the secret
Is spoken in heart, unheard.

The message is naught but kindness,
A prayer that your life may be
As fair and pure as the beauty
He walks so often to see.

THE COMING GOODBYE.

The summer will come, with its music
Of birds, and its darting of plumes;
The summer will come with its sunshine,
And odors, and glory of blooms.

The wizard, the magical summer,
Will dizen the town with his smile,
And make it a city well worthy
To sparkle in Eden a while;

Will deck it with velvet of verdure,
With jewels of leaflet and flower,
With glamor of dawn and of sunset,
With shimmering glamor of shower.

But you will depart from the Eden
The moment its grace is complete;
Your eyes will be lost from the window,
Your smile will abandon the street.

The beaches will hail you; the ocean
Will anthem its welcome to you;
To you the glad billows will flutter
Their pennons of argent and blue;

While I, in the sun-beaten city,
Shall watch for your passing in vain,
And think of your lighthearted greetings,
And wish it were winter again.

RECOLLECTION.

I well remember the moment
When first I beheld your face:
A moment: it passed like lightning:
But, like it, it left a trace.

I sat in the hall of music,
And hundreds beside were there,
All vanished now in the bygone,
All phantoms faded in air.

One instant I saw the glances
Of blue, the braidings of gold;
Then swiftly that ghostly people
Around you, hiding you, rolled.

The others are all forgotten,
The music has left no tone,
I cannot recall the pageant,
I remember your face alone.

SEPARATION.

Never to see her nor hear her,
To speak her name aloud never;
Yet hold her always the dearer,
Yet love her forever.

To sleep and dream I am near her,
To curse the daybeams that sever;
To hold her dearer and dearer,
To love her forever.

To see from day to day clearer
She blights both hope and endeavor;
Yet absolve her, bless her, revere her,
Yet love her forever.

Never to see her nor hear her,
To speak her name aloud never;
To hold her always the dearer,
To love her forever.*

* Imitated from the French of Sully-Prudhomme.

CHERISHED ILLUSIONS.

Again the wonder-story is told.
Is she who listens woman or vision?
I know the braidings of sunrise gold,
The tranquil gaze of azure elysian—
Such gold and azure as though the skies
Had rained their glory in braids and eyes.

Have all the cruel, malignant years
Been merely slumber, nightmare, illusion?
Has it only seemed that love was tears?
That hope was mockery, life confusion?
That those who purposed to walk together
Have walked apart through misery's weather?

Is it true that I am all I was
In days when joy partook of madness?
That I have broken destiny's laws
And torn from death a vanished gladness?
Yea, all the happiness long as life
I dreamed to win in dreaming her wife?

O let me believe the false to-day!
No boding glance! no cruel negation!
Believe with me, Blondine, and say,
The morrow brings no separation.
Endow me richly, O love! my treasure,
With all that dreams can coin of pleasure.

* * * * * * * * * *
O fair illusions of long ago!
O why return in guise of a maiden?

Too many the broken hopes I know
Since Yahveh drove me forth from Aidenn;
Too many phantoms and winning guiles
Follow and mock with remembered smiles.

SUNSET ON LEBANON.

Robed in vermillion the sun sinks behind Cypriot moun-
tains;
Daintily many-hued eve mantles with rainbows
Libanus;
Darkles already Beyroot between its gardens and
harbor;
Beyond, the Mediterranean stretches in quest o[
Atlantis.
Far is the sea, yet anigh; furlongs below me the surge—
Hammer the beaches with foam; yet, faintly rise —
their clamor,
Softened to murmurings low—a scarcely audib[
sighing.
Various glitters the sea—calms intermixed wi[
whitecaps;
Many the breezes that cross it—orient, northern an[
southern;
Barks with favoring gales, steering for opposit[
havens,
Driven by hectoring gods, or drawn by whimsical[
tritons.
Broad and benign is the sea, yet few are the keel
that track it;
Less than a dozen I mark, though Sidon is near an

But argosies manned by ghosts swiftly arrive,
uncountable,
Opulent navies of old flowing in endless procession;
Tyrian, Persian, Hellene, Roman and Arab and
Tartar;
Galleys of crossletted knights, Godfrey and leonine
Richard;
Frigates of gunpowder times reeling through vapor
of battle.
Thus for a little I gaze, wrapped in a dream of the
bygone,
Careless that glorious-eyed Lulu and Miriam,
near me,
Prattle their Syrian views concerning supper and
breakfast.

THE LOTTERY VALENTINE.

By chance allotted as the mate
Of one you neither love nor know,
Who brings you neither joy nor woe,
What mockery is this of fate!

We play like children at a game,
We mime the deepest game of life,
We prattle words like love and wife
Whose fire should set the soul aflame.

No purpose hides beneath our vows,
No heartbeat storms athwart our mirth;
We hold our words as little worth
As bird-notes tinkling through the boughs.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REVERIES.

We shoot an arrow in the dark,
Nor know if destiny will guide
The careless missile all aside,
Or drive it through a throbbing mark.

And yet the fragile jest may live,
A prophecy of something sure,
Of something bitter to endure,
Or sweet as Paradise can give.

UNDERNEATH.

The skater lightly laughs and glides,
Unknowing that, beneath the ice
Whereon he carves his fair device,
A stiffened corpse in silence slides.

It glareth upward at his play ;
Its rigid, ashy fingers steal
Beneath his gaily flying heel ;
It floats along and floats away.

He has not seen its horror pass ;
His heart is blithe ; the village hears
His distant laughter ; he careers
In festive waltz athwart the glass.

We are the skaters, we who skim
The glare of life's enchanted flood,
And drive with gladness in the blood
A daring dance from brim to brim.

Our feet are swift, our faces burn,
Our hopes aspire like soaring birds;
The world takes courage from our words
And sees the golden time return.

But ever near us, silent, cold,
Are those who bounded from the bank
With eager hearts, like us, and sank
Because their feet were overbold.

They sank through breathing-holes of vice,
Through luring sheens of unbelief;
They know not their despair and grief;
Their hearts and minds are turned to ice.

THE WIZARD.

The pulse of sunlight, ocean, air and flame,
The pulse of rhythm along the cadenced line,
The pulse of music, Ponto's pulse and mine,
Are they diverse, O Wizard, or the same?

I heard the Wizard answer from the sky:
"The universe is but a phantom show;
I bid one shadow come, another go;
There is but one thing real; it is I."

"Their strength is but a little heat; their soul
Is but a little swiftness; they are waves
That only move to find their sudden graves,
That only seem to live because they roll."

RECOLLECTIONS AND REVERIES.

He said moreover, "Each to each I turn;
I interchange and play the game agen;
I crown the water-jellies kings of men;
I summon midges from the kingly urn.

"The same!" the Wizard said, "the very same!
The same in matter, rhythmus, heat and power!
I know not why the fleeting shapes I shower
Around my throne bear difference of name."

DESPONDENCIES.

Where are the visions of my boyish nights?
And where the glowing hopes of yestermorn?
Have I done anything since I was born
But watch, with eyelids closed, unreal sights?

I sometimes think of labors gone before,
And say, "To-morrow morning I resume;
The treasured flask retains the old perfume."—
Alas! the treasured flask retains no more.

Unless the sun of Austerlitz arise,
In vain the chieftain's head, the hero's heart;
Unless the tricksy wind of fortune start,
We cannot reach our Earthly Paradise.

An archer shot an arrow in the dark,
And laughed, " 'Tis but an arrow thrown awa;
But when he sported forth at break of day
 "Found his brother lying white and stark.

A speck of dust has lost another speck,
And prays the Sund'ring Storm to soothe its woes;
The Storm drives on, and every moment blows
A thousand other tiny loves to wreck.

Each century some mighty soul displays
The all-explaining Fact which all admit;
But ere a hundred years his name is writ
Among the charlatans of bygone days.

"No hell!" the sage proclaimed: we danced with mirth.
Apollyon heard, and answered with a smile:
"You cannot do without me yet awhile,
Unless you hanker for a hell on earth."

EN VOYAGE.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Tears,
And sighed to see the spectres thronging through;
But they replied, "You are the captive, you!
We have been free as air these many years."

I watched the billows beat the Adrian shore;
Each tossed exultingly, then ceased to be;
And one of them was you, and one was me:
But Ocean lived and thundered as before.

The Coliseum! There at Caesar's feet,
The gladiator bowed his pale farewell;
But pausing there, I mused of Heaven and Hell,
And worlds dismissed to triumph or defeat.

While in the Pantheon I knelt to pray,
With thoughts of Jove and Jesus much perplext,
A broken Hermes scoffed, "What credence next?"
And haloed saints lamented, "Who can say?"

To find the Truth, the Truth that cannot die,
I wandered darkling, wandered everywhere,
Until a statue, through the Grecian air,
All beautiful, responded, "Here am I."

NEW YORK BAY IN 1624.

Skipper Cornelis Mey, hardy sea-rover of Holland,
Clutches with horny hand the galliot's squeaking
tiller,
Whistling a viking's prayer to indolent elves of breezes,
Marking the shaking sails and the streaky foam of
the currents;
Whiles, in the hollowing waist, sombre of visage and
vesture,
Marvelling, stand the Walloons, dumb as if carven
in marble,
Watching the oncoming point of a hazy, forested
island,
Dotted with cabins of bark, where salvages scream
and signal
Wild invitation—to what? barter? or cannibal battle?

Wandering, swarthy Walloons, born of pre-Aryan
races,

Chased from Numidian* plains to Europe in mythical aeons;
Hunters primeval beside the Tagus and Guadalquivir,
Threading the bald Pyrenees, the forests of Gaul and Arden;
Scattering Teuton and Kimber, yielding to Caesar and Clovis,
Torn by unwearying war, shared among chaffering princes,
Yet still existent, nor quite forgetful of name and glory;
Whither betide you at last? sons of the Belgae—my fathers—
Tracking the occident wave under the lion of Holland.

"Turmuls and terrors we leave, flying from Spain the destroyer
Drunken with blood of the saints, thirsting for blood forever;
Battle-trod Europe we leave, seeking the shores of Atlantis,
Daring the grave-digging sea, the deadly breath of morasses,
Daring the puma and bear, the wolf and furtive Mohican;
Hoping, at least, to obtain peace from the warrings of nations,
Peace from the scaffold and stake; yea, freedom of word and worship."

* So say Collignon and others, while Ripley and others say Armenian.

So answer the dark Walloons, pilgrims of numerous
ages,
Hunted from land unto land by stress of following
peoples.

THE OLD-TIME VILLAGE.

Evening descends on the village,
The dew has jeweled the blooms,
The hawks are wheeling and darting,
The beetles whir in the glooms.

Moonlight silvers the rapid,
The waterfall pours its drone,
The frogs hold revel in chorus,
The whippoorwill grieves alone.

A somnolent handful gathers
In the dusky schoolhouse for prayer;
Beneath the sharp nose of the pastor
Two candles gutter and flare.

A russet-faced deacon rises
To speak—if ever he can.
He halts and mumbles: no matter:
God hears the worthy wee man.

A ringleted maiden's treble
Bewitches the schoolboy's ear:—
Even yet, O dimpled soprano,
Your anthem exults, and I hear!

The village remains, and the river
Beams, and the roses blow;
But the longsince dead are the only
Abiders there I know.

The living pass me in silence,
Remembrance and welcome fail;
But the holy ones of the churchyard
Awaken to bid me, Hail!

TALES AND BALLADS



TALES AND BALLADS.

A SEASIDE STORY.

I

The Mermaiden.

There were jubilant sails on the ocean
And skeleton wrecks on the land;
There were laughter of billows in motion
To dance and to die on the sand.

There were shadowy Thules of islands,
Where Edens of lovers might be;
There was sea to the faraway skylands,
Wild, futile heartbeatings of sea.

There were sea-gods and nymphs in the waters
That burnished the beach with their spray;
All the beautiful sons and the daughters
Of ocean had gathered in play.

But the marvel of all, and the jewel,
Was a heart that had worshipped for years,
Which a mermaiden laughing and cruel
Had flung to a tempest of tears.

II

The Seaside Lake.

A lake beside the ocean's brim,
Where velvet lilies dream and swim,
And rushes nod beside the whisper
Of ripples shimmering faint and dim.

Anear, the yearning tempest cries;
It comes from Love's lost paradise;
It leaps against the barring beaches;
It foams in agony, writhes and dies.

In vain the surges sob and break;
They cannot reach the imprisoned lake,
Nor rive the crystal of its ripples,
Nor kiss one silvery flower awake.

O love, our lives are shored apart,
And all the cyclones of my heart
Can never fling one throbbing billow
Among the refuges where thou art.

III

The Meeting.

Do you remember the night
Of crescented, astral glamor,
The beaches brindled with light,
The foam and the billowy clamor?

TALES AND BALLADS.

Do you remember the bliss
So stealthily sought and hidden?
The clasp, the pressure, the kiss,
That all the gods had forbidden?

Alas that a love for life
Must live and die without token!
That the dearest of words, "My wife"
Must be forever unspoken!

As Heaven is my witness, I
Had gladly cherished that woman
In face of the sea and the sky,
The earth and all that is human.

Years hence that evening will beam
Athwart life's ocean of sadness,
And I shall see it, and dream
That loving was naught but gladness.

IV

Remembrance.

I had thought to see her no more,
But I dwell in Thules of fancy,
And she haunteth their every shore
With her beautiful necromancy.

In the midnight's hiddenmost lair,
In the morning's vividest portal,
I discern her aslant on air,
Like a spirit who greets a mortal.

O the delicate, tender gleam
Of the carven Parian features,
Such as sculptors delight to dream
Of in marble for godlike creatures!

As I worship she seems to chase
All of sombreness from my story,
And around me infinite space
Overbrims one moment with glory.

But a moment! And then the spot
Is a cell for the broken-hearted,
And that portraiture, thus forgot,
Is another angel departed.

TENDER AND TRUE.

I

The Stroll.

Do you remember the diadem
Of purple cliff where we stood together,
Beneath the canopied golden weather,
And saw the lanskip gleam like a gem?

Saw burnished river, meadow and vales,
The lustrous domes of emerald highland,
The topaz strand of the distant island,
The turquoise mere and the pearly sails?

The pageant flashed like a jeweled dream;
But your enchantment doubled the splendor;
You cast the glory, mighty and tender,
Of love on forest, meadow and stream.

Far into heaven I soared the while;
Frail as you seemed, you had seraph pinions;
You bore me to fanes in starry dominions;
You made me god with merely your smile.

You made me god, companioned with you—
Ashtar and Adon—sister and brother;
But not alike divine to each other;
I was the sham god; you were the true.

Do you remember—Alas, alas!
'Tis I, and I alone, who remember;
That hour, to you, is a perished ember,
A withered nosegay, an emptied glass.

II

A Hope.

A little hope!
It may not be true!
And the heavens above me seem to ope
Their curtains of blue;
And the angel ladders of sunlight slope
For me to mount and pass through.
The tale that I heard
Was only the chirp of a random bird,
A babble some ancient grimalkin purred,
The repetition of nobody's word,
A note that hazard or fantasy blew,
That the freaky pygmies of elfland drew
From harebell trumpets jeweled with dew.

Why should I mope,
I who have dared with heroes to cope,
 Who barely yesterday ceased to gird
My loins for battle with treason's crew?
 Why should I throb and reel and shiver
 Like a reed in the river,
Because an airy inanity stirred,
 Because an arrow from falsehood's quiver
Out of vacancy whirred,
 Into nothingness flew
And is spent forever?
 Now peace has come,
The air with promise of love is laden;
 I will turn my back on the silenced drum
 And seek the rest of my childhood's home,
There to worship once more and sue
 Before the face of the fairest girl
 God ever wrought in coral and pearl,
Or marble of Aidenn.

III

The Wedding.

I have fought and fallen. The strife was vain,
 The maniac wrestle for disbelief—
Recoil of an idiot wild with pain—
 A tortured idiot, mad for relief.
I have seen and believed. The tale stood well—
 As strong as despair and sin and grief—
As true as—yes, that earth is a hell
 Where only the damned and the devils dwell.

I lurked by the lattice and saw—not all—
But more and clearer than heart could bear.
A taunting splendor illumined the hall;
The music clamored with insolent blare.
I cowered and glared while the careless tread
Of passers jostled my dumb despair,
Not knowing they trampled a heart that bled,
Not knowing they stumbled against one dead.

The gibbering drunkard struck my cheek;
But what to me was a stranger's blow?
My friend had stabbed me; my soul was weak
And humble and unresenting with woe.
And she I worshipped had edged the blade,
And bidden me bare my breast. But no!
I cannot hate her; I was not made
To curse the altar where once I prayed.

They had craved my presence. A scented note
Arrived in bridal ribbons to plead—
Go! I would sooner have held my throat
To the cannibal's knife and bid him feed.
Go! I trampled the billet to earth
And swore to have done with the human breed—
To house myself by my blighted hearth
Till the burial mutes should bear me forth.

And yet I went—like a beggar crept
Through tainted alleys and reeled to the door;
Shaded my visage and wept—yes, wept!
To hear the viols their jubilee pour—

Quivered with rage when the rhythmic beat
 Of dancers hollowly thrummed the floor,
And started away with tremulous feet
If a waltzer paused by the window seat.

At last I wandered, crouching and dumb,
 Like a starving tiger, balked of his prey,
To my lonely dwelling, my childhood's home
 (My cell henceforth to my dying day),
Divided from hers by a wooded dell,
 And watched in frenzy her window ray
Until it vanished, and with it fell
The only glimmer that lighted my hell.

IV

The Grove.

The wooded ravine fills with night
 Between her roof and mine,
But through its boughs I mark the light
 Of her chamber window shine,
A dazing glimmer, ruby bright,
 That turns my brain like wine.

A little grove, a hundred trees:
 I know each oak and fir.
I wander there to hear the glees
 Of the birds who sing of her,
To kiss the passing of the breeze
 Whose plumes her curtain stir.

A little grove, but cruel strong,
It rules us like to slaves ;
Between our lives its shadows throng
With the sweep of ocean's waves ;
The power that sunders right from wrong
Pervades the leafy naves.

No might but his could break the spell
Who lords the demon sky.
How often would I thank him well,
If the beast would steal anigh
And lead me through that barring dell—
To win her?—No, to die.

v

The Sleep.

He had threaded the wood ;
He had paused in its utmost verge,
The verge where her dwelling stood ;
And there had laid him to brood
In tune to the night-wind's dirge,
To the wail of midnight's mournfullest mood.
And there he slept
When the morning threw
Its fragrant shadows athwart the dew
And dried the tears that the roses had wept.
The tender light of the infant morn,
The light of a day just born,
Awoke from its cradle and touched his brow ;
A day that never knew him till now

Parted the branches and touched and kist
More gently than kisses the frosted flake,
As though it loved the moment it wist.
It touched, but might not awake;
Alas! nor evil nor good,
That slumber may shake.

He sleeps
In the midst of the mighty brood
Who inhabit the unknown caves
Beneath eternity's deeps,
Beneath the mere whose ripples are graves.
He knows the slumber that wakes not,
He has entered the rest that breaks not.
His eyes, while gazing upon her home,
Where footstep of his might never come,
Had drooped and closed forever.
They saw the Eden forbid to him;
They saw—and then their sight was dim.
The heavens darkened, earth fell dumb.
The clock that striketh, "Forever! Never!"
Rang out. He passed eternity's brim.
Gone was the thought of gladness departed,
Gone the sorrow that slew;
And there he lay, the brave loving-hearted,
Love's Douglas, tender and true.

The Dead March.

The hoarse drum groans, the shrill fife greets,
The dead-march wails from hearth to tomb,
The ranked feet tramp through black-hung streets,
The swart steeds drag the bier's slow gloom.

The men he led still march with him,
They keep the step and speak no word;
Their brows are knit, their eyes are dim,
Their thoughts are grave, their hearts are stirred.

They mind how oft in war's fierce blaze
He cheered them where a fiend might quail,
How red his cheek, how blithe his gaze—
That gaze now quenched, that cheek now pale.

With slow, set tread they pass *her* by.
She gives one glance and drops one tear.
They know he died, they ask not why;
They mark her not, though she is near.

They hold that death is lord of all,
They hold that no man owns his breath,
They hold that each must have his bairn,
That life is war, and war is death.

They halt; they fire the last sad shot
With calm, stern eyes and sure, strong hands;
Then quickly, lightly leave the spot
To jubilant bars of brazen bands.

THE SAME IN THE ENDING.

Our eyes greet often and often,
 Yet know each other no better,
Though sometimes hers seemed to soften
 When sudden and near I met her.

And once I thought she grew paler
 Because I approached too boldly.
What folly! No heartbeat would fail her,
 Though I slept starkly and coldly.

No doubt 'twould waken her scorning
 To know that such fancies cheer me;
To know that I rise each morning
 From visions throning her near me;

To know that throbbing and humming
 And dizziness stir my senses
When far off I see her coming
 And hope for one of her glances.

What could she care for a stranger,
 Grave, silent, passing in hurry,
Whose love would be but a danger,
 Whose gaze perhaps is a worry?

Farewell! We part without meeting;
 Yet the senseless word rings sadly.
Farewell! 'Tis my only greeting
 To one I might have loved madly.



TALES AND BALLADS.

With tears it was felt and written;
Alas! it could not be spoken.
Years flitted; those hearts were smitten
By others; by others broken.

'Twas all the same in the ending;
'Twas only sobbing and sighing;
Their smiles were naught but pretending;
Their first true gladness was dying.

'Twas all the same in the sorrow
As though they had tower'd in sinning;
And if God's to-day had no morrow,
His smile were scarcely worth winning.

THE VESTAL.

All the day we are holden asunder
By destiny's infinite hands,
By society's carping and wonder;
By creeds and their stony commands,
By the chidings of dogma and virtue,
By maidenhood's blush in your face,
By my terror lest loving may hurt you,
By conscience and grace.

But at night, in the Eden of slumber,
All obstacles fade and depart;
Nor the planets nor man may encumber
My way to your side and your heart

I believe that my longings have won you
To render my soul its desire;
I believe that my kisses fall on you
Like rose leaves of fire.

So we live till the moment of waking
Removes you and joy from my side;
Yes, the day in its envious breaking
Has stolen my virginal bride,
Who laid on my shoulder her tresses
And smiled when I called her my own;
It has borne her from vows and caresses,
And left me alone.

THE BISHOP OF THULE.

The Lord Archbishop of Thule
(God grant him honor and ruth!)
Believed most truly and duly
In all that he held for truth.

As angels know in the skylands
High grace the bishop achieved;
He sailed to the Fairy Islands
And preached there what he believed.

He summoned the elfin legions
To leave their heathenish creed,
And told them of lofty regions
More lovely than fairy mead.

Far into the night he pleaded;
The moon went hearkening by,
And only the starlight beaded
The magical elfland sky.

"O brothers," he cried, "great wonders
The truth of my words shall prove;
Belief can loosen the thunders
And cause the hills to remove.

"But thunders would sorely frighten,
And never a hill is here;
I'll pray that the stars which brighten
This welkin may disappear."

His honest old hands he lifted,
And closed his honest old eyes,
And prayed till the daybeams drifted
In argosies through the skies.

Then yearning, hoping, confiding,
Upturning his grateful gaze,
He saw the galaxies hiding
Their glory in morning's haze.

Thereon the little brown people,
The trolls and fairies and elves,
Erected a chapel and steeple,
And prayed for wonders themselves.

And the bishop proclaimed in Thule,
"A miracle God hath wrought;"
And all that he said he truly
Believed in his inmost thought.

THE LOST HUNTER.

The mountains grow daily stranger,
The river windings betray;
And the ranger who laughed at danger
Has lost forever his way.

Full many a shore he trended,
Full many a desert crost,
Full many a crest ascended;
But Boone, the hunter, was lost.

At last, as the day fell dimmer,
He came to a peak of snow,
Revealing with ghostly glimmer
More countries than mortals know.

And there, on the topmost glisten,
The ranger saw phantoms three,
Each warning, "O pilgrim, listen!"
Each pleading, "O come with me!"

A seraph was one from glory,
And one was a darkling sprite,
And one was a chieftain of story
The hunter had slain in fight.

Three trails they showed him, divided
The one from the other far;
The first through firmaments glided
To ramparts bright as a star;

The second slanted through shadows
 Beyond earth's somberest bounds;
The third sought emerald meadows—
 The Beautiful Hunting Grounds.

Said Boone, "The skyland is brighter
 Than sinner like me may scale,
And only a craven fighter
 Belongs in the murky trail;

"So now to my ancient foeman
 I proffer my troth and say:
Guide me, O bowman, where no man
 Unearths the hatchet to slay."

THE GOAT.

When Lucifer fled from Salem
 He rode a reverend goat
Who talked like the beast of Baalam
 And knew all magic by rote.

No steed had ever such motion,
 Or strength, or terrible mien;
He vaulted mountain and ocean,
 He frightened as soon as seen.

Wherever his footfalls dallied
 They withered the blooms and grass;
The comets and stars went pallid
 With horror to see him pass.

The witches welcomed his coming,
The dead arose from their graves,
The fiends fled hustling and humming
From Sheol's shadiest caves.

The goat got prouder and prouder,
He fancied this power his own;
Each minute he boasted louder,
And talked of himself alone.

"Dear Satan, the day is breaking
When earth will know me," he said;
"The stars in the sky are quaking
Already to hear my tread.

"My force and knowledge of magic
Are surely beyond compare;
I long to do something tragic
And make the universe stare.

"I long to throw down a quarter,
Or so, of the heavenly host,
And trample the trash to mortar,
To show who governs the roast.

Just then the pilgrimage ended
Beside the portal of Hell;
In silence Satan descended,
Scarce nodding the goat farewell.

That moment his gifts departed—
Gab, sorcery, speed and pluck;
No longer Creation started
Whenever he reared to buck.

A FABLE OF SALEM.

"Come quickly!" wept the dying Grace;
 "Abide with me, my pastor!
Then might I finish well the race,
 And mount and fly the faster;
Then might I suffer the Maker's face
 And kiss the feet of the Master."

But far away the forest rocked
 With storms from curst dominions;
The witches skirred, the wizards flocked,
 The air was thick with pinions;
And there the minister danced and mocked
 With Satan's sootiest minions.

He mocked and danced in priestly black;
 No warlock matched his leaping.
Apollyon clapped his portly back
 And laughed almost to weeping;
And the parson skipped like a jumping-jack
 To think his deacons were sleeping.

But high above the mongrel herd,
 Above the maddened Endor,
The mighty, shining cohorts gird
 A throne of awful splendor,
And a seraph sternly writes a word
 No language of earth can render.

THE BRAVE.

The river hastens and glistens.
(Has destiny's stream a shore?)
The weary voyager listens,
And hears the cataract's roar.

The foam is flashing 'and leaping,
But strongly he rows for life.
(Ah, who can think without weeping
Of many a hopeless strife?)

The banks are luscious and glowing
With flowers and flowery breath;
The vines their fruitage are showing
To him who wrestles with death.

The woodland carols and twitters
Bravuras from every limb;
The whole earth warbles and glitters
With gladness for all but him.

The paddles quiver—they shiver!
But nothing may shake a chief;
He yields his life to the river,
But conquers terror and grief.

His robe around him he gathers,
Defying his howling grave,
And chants the dirge of his fathers,
And dies the death of a brave.

So let me face the disaster
 That ravens beneath my prow,
 Affronting woe as a master
 And plunging with changeless brow.

THE PILGRIM.

Afar, above sorrow and peril,
 He sees the Bright City unfold
 Its walls of sardonyx and beryl,
 Of chrysoprase, jacinth and gold,
 Its galaxied turrets and portals,
 Its glories that never grow dim,
 While, crowning its splendor, immortals
 Wave welcome, a welcome to him.

Below him, he watches the regions
 Of death and the shadow of death;
 He hears the oncoming of legions
 Who threaten with flamings for breath;
 Behind them Hell luridly lightens,
 The smoke of its torment ascends;
 But calmly his armor he tightens
 And swiftly to battle descends.

Thus doeth the valiant pure-hearted,
 The lofty, the leader of men;
 Thus vanquished the noble departed
 Whose trophies remain to our ken;
 They blenched not for labor or sorrow;
 They charged, though Avernus might glow.
 Then so let me meet my to-morrow,
 Though bucklered and cuirassed with woe.

THE DEMON'S STORY.

Now hearken! derided the devil
(Buffoon of the powers of air); .
I wearied of tempting the evil,
 I wearied of vexing despair;
I hardly arrived for the revel;
 I flew, but the mourning was there.

Then cycle on cycle I waited
For one who was joyous and pure;
With mortals uncounted I mated,
 Aye searching for happiness sure;
For innocence such as I hated,
 To practice my torture or lure.

I found him, the raptured, the holy,
 The man without trespass or tear;
His visage was loving and lowly,
 His eyes beheld Paradise near;
But slowly his breathing fell; slowly
 His riven heart reddened a spear.

THE DARK COMRADE.

Through days of enigma and sorrow
(From doubt and dejection unscreened),
Through vigils that dreaded the morrow
 (Ah, never a star intervened!),
I walked with the friend of my bosom,
 And that friend was a mournful fiend.

TALES AND BALLADS.

For years we were pilgrims united;
Oh, strange were those otherworld years!
We darkled like goblins affrighted,
We whispered of perils and tears;
Yes, terrible friend of my bosom,
Thou sharedst my anguish and fears.

Long since that companion departed;
I know not the wherefore nor when.
Henceforth I was humaner hearted,
And herded and labored with men;
Yet often, dark friend of my bosom,
I would change the Now for the Then.

Yea more! I would greet thee with gladness
And nevermore part from thy side;
Would follow thee, Shadow of madness,
Wherever thy moaning may guide;
Yea, follow thee, friend of my bosom,
Though seraphim beckon and chide.

CALENTURE.

She came; she was my father's child;
She bore my mother's guise.
She came; a cunning fiend beguiled;
They dazed each other's eyes.
The joy that on my bridal smiled
Fell swift'y from the skies.

I heard them parting in the night;
Three hearts together bled
If ever woman pitied wight,

I pitied him who plead;
If ever maid won crown of light,
She won it well who fled.

But since, a darkness covers all,
The sun no more will shine;
Dim phantoms flit along the wall,
Low incantations whine;
Unearthly creatures weave a pall,
And whisper it is mine.

THE PLAYTHING SKY.

Where do the children fly
When they are dreaming?
Straight to the Plaything Sky,
Soaring and beaming.

Over the Wonder Sea
Sparkle the darlings,
Clapping their hands with glee,
Singing like starlings.

Wonderful lands appear,
Wonderful cities;
Wonderful talk they hear,
Wonderful ditties.

Squirrels come out to them,
Butterflies sing to them,
Guinea-pigs shout to them,
Tulip-bells ring to them.

Hosts of tin soldier men
Wave their tin banners,
Candy-wigged aldermen
Make their wigged manners.

Gingerbread gentles whack
Gingerbread ponies;
Sugarstick ladies smack
Sugarstick cronies.

Sitting in royal state,
Counting her tea things,
Giggles the little-great
Queen of the playthings.

Manikin troopers stand
Round her wee palace;
Manikin maidens hand
Cream-pot and chalice.

Wooden horns clamor out,
"Children are coming";
Wooden drums hammer out
Welcome becoming.

Down trips her majesty,
Smiling and kissing;
Roundabout busses she,
Not a child missing.

Then to her regal hall
Kindly she leads them;
Gives them her playthings all,
Aprons and feeds them.

Gaily the children play,
Chatter and simper;
Then, of a sudden, they
Wake up and whimper.

Where is the Plaything Queen?
Where are her treasures?
Gone to the Neverseen—
Gone, like earth's pleasures.

THE FASTIDIOUS GOBLIN.

There was an imp of Endor,
Eternities gone by,
Who saw the Lord of Splendor
Create his starry sky.

He saw the great suns stealing
From nothing and from night,
The worlds begin their wheeling,
The comets take their flight.

The mighty, mingled forces
Suffused creation's frame;
Along the astral courses
Throbbed motion, heat and flame.

The galaxies went singing
Adown their wondrous ways;
The universe was ringing
With gladness and with praise.

Then boasted Master Goblin
He too would make a sphere,
And straight began his cobbling,
And wrought perchance a year.

But nothing could he fashion;
No world for him might be:
He lacked the godlike passion;
Creative love lacked he.

His work had neither motion,
Nor light, nor form, nor grace—
A wreck on being's ocean,
A blur on glory's face.

So, seeing that no creature
Of his might thread the skies,
He throned himself as teacher,
And dared to criticise.

He called the comets crazy,
The systems badly massed;
The Milky Way was hazy,
The suns were overcast.

The plan was accidental,
The start foretold the close,
The tone was sentimental,
The scenes lacked Greek repose.

In nature all was lacking,
And lacking too in art;
A little wholesome hacking
Would better every part.

MEDLEY.

The motives should be fewer,
The aim more pure and high;
And any good reviewer
Could make a better sky.

Or, if he praised, 'twas only
The dimmest of the host;
The great orbs shining lonely
Were those he flouted most.

And, ever since, his mission
Has been to blame and sneer,
Consigning to perdition
The lights God holdeth dear;

The first, the greatest critic,
The model of his kind,
The goblin analytic
Who hates creative mind.

THE OLD KNIGHT AND THE DAMOZEL.

I

I think these limbs are strong again,
These scanty locks are newly brown;
In thought I mount my steed amain
And ride afar for her renown.

In dusty lists, where trumpets blare,
I quell the dourest knights that live,
And crown her queen of beauty there,
And kiss the glove she bends to give.

I sail afar 'neath orient stars,
Climb terraced slopes of Palestine,
Shout *Agnes* through the helmet bars,
And break the Paynim's turbaned line.

I carry slaughter through the tents,
I stain with blood the Kedron's tide;
I mount the holy battlements,
And aye for her I strike and ride.

Thou fair and noble Damozel,
Thy name shall be my battle-cry
In joust and storm and charging mell,
Wherever knight may do or die.

II

He summoned archer, squire and steed,
He pledged anew his lordly wealth;
Then raised a golden cup of mead,
And, ere he mounted, drank her health.

Alas, O loving heart and pure!
The light is fading from his eyes;
And sighing, "Agnes, reine d'Amour!"
He drinks to her, but drinking dies.

And where was she?—In castle hall
She danced to pipe and dulcimer;
She knew not anything at all
Of him who dying drank to her.

MEDLEY.

III

In the Golden City.

re Old Knight:

O Lord, thou knowest what befell
That latest love thou grantedst me
While I was living. Was it well
To quench it as it 'gan to be?

re Lord:

'Twas well. No rosebud damozel
Can bloom aright on blighted tree;
And time it was for thee to see
The mansions where my good knights dwell.

re Old Knight:

I thank thee, Lord, I worship Thee;
Thy grace is more than tongue can tell.
But, one last favor, Lord! will she,
My love, betide to Heaven or Hell?

Torus:

He loved a rosebud maiden,
The knight of silver hair;
And never a saint in Aidenn
Will seem to him so fair;
And, be it in Hell or Aidenn,
He hopes to find her there.

TALES AND BALLADS.

THE VANISHED CASTLE.

I tread the site of the castle
Where dwelt my fathers of yore;
The castle, the lords and the ladies
Have vanished forevermore.

Yet the magian hour refashions
Moat, portcullis and hall,
Where phantoms grovel in donjon,
Or revel in blazoned wall;

Where, clutching a dizzy turret,
A damozel kneels to pray,
Her wet eyes chasing a rider,
In armor, glinting away.

Hubert and Hugh and Walter,
Agnes, Matilde, Isabeau,
They see me, they beckon—but sudden
They are whirled to the long-ago.

The villagers, gathering round me,
My name and race demand;
Then ask with a stare of terror,
“Comest thou back for the land?”

The query commingles the ages:—
Who am I, friends, but he
Hubertus, the old crusader
Who fell by the Tyrian sea?

NIFFER.

I delve in the temple of Niffer,
The town that Oannes planned
Ages ere Babylon lifted
Her towers in Nebo's land.

The levels of Accad and Shinar
Around me glimmer and steam;
And I swoon in the quivering slumber
Of fever; and madly I dream.

O copperhued spademen of Accad,
Why do you bellow for gold?
Backsheesh is the cry of the living;
And you went to Sheol of old.

A myriad moons before Nimrod
You tickled these plains with the hoe,
You walled and turreted Niffer,
You routed the Kings of the Bow.

But now you are dead as Merodach,
And I am as dead as you;
So let us shovel, O brothers,
To bury each other anew.

So Boodle every wire did pull,
Rolled logs with all creation,
And piped our glorious Capitol
To push his legislation.

Another tax! another loan!
The syndicates made honey;
The people drained out, groan by groan,
John Boodle's darling's money.

Then Edith Jane de Duval Bates
Invited to her wedding
The lobbyists of all the states
That paid her plate and bedding.

They came and bowed; the nuptial knot
Was tied; the time went cheery;
And not a knave or fool or sot
But envied John his deary.

Till midnight, revel swelled apace;
Till midnight, danced the lady.
But when the clock struck twelve, her face
Fell strangely weird and shady.

"Away! away!" she wildly cried.
"No need of wedding coaches!
One beast will carry groom and bride;
And swiftly he approaches."

Then galloped creaking to the door
That steed of legislation
Who nobly died in days of yore
To rise and munch the nation.

There's a castle of joyance on Wilmington Bay
Where lovers and ladies dance night into day;
Each gent at that shindig is valiant and tall,
And rifles by dozens stand loaded in hall.

But young Lochinvar romps up to the gate,
Unheeding of aught but of being too late;
He kicks the hounds outeren, wades into the swim,
And scowls at those suitors, all scowling at him.

"I've nothing 'gainst you 'uns," says young Lochinvar;
"Just hold up your flippers and stand as you are;
There's a lady I want here, a tailor-made dame,
And Imogen Bill is her idolized name."

He pranced through the revel, he swarmed for that girl,
He gave her a cinch and he gave her a whirl.
She gurgled a gasp, but she couldn't gasp "No";
And right down the middle they waltzed for the "do'."

There was mounting in haste among Wilmington squires;
A mile in a minute they scored on their flyers;
They hummed over level and valley and hill,
But they found not a symptom of Imogen Bill.

Beside the French Broad, there's a palace of logs,
Surrounded by mashes and furnished with dogs,
Where Lochinvar sits on a catamount's hide,
And watches for rivals, and watches his bride.

With deerkiller ready and courser and whip,
He watches her constant for fear she may skip;
He watches Carliny from mountain to shore;
And Imogen needs all his watching, and more.

JUDGE BOODLE.

A congressman Judge Boodle was,
A cunning chief in caucus,
Unversed in statesmanship and laws,
But able to out-talk us.

To Boodle came a lady fair,
In rich and radiant raiment,
Whose coaxing smile and lovelorn air
Betokened her a claimant.

"My name," she sighed, "is Edith Jane
Van Tromp de Duval Bates, sir;
And I am of the noblest strain
In these United States, sir.

"My father's sires in days of old
Led armies forth to battle;
My mother's kin had stores of gold
And lands and countless cattle.

"But cruel Time brought dark reverse.
Alas! the sad confession!
A claim against Columbia's purse
Is now my sole possession.

"To battle rode George Washington
Upon my grandsire's courser,
And when the victory was won
The courser was no more, sir.

"That faithful steed had borne our race
In saddle, chaise and pillion;
My father never saw his face,
But called him worth a million.

"And now, my gracious friend, display
The skill you oft have shown us;
Bring in a noble claim, and pay
Your labors with a bonus.

"Nor will I promise pelf alone;
This heart—my courage falters—
A woman's grateful heart shall throne
Your image on its altars."

John Boodle shed a manly tear
To see that lady's sorrow;
Then squeezed her hand, and said, "My dear,
I'll mount that horse to-morrow.

"I know my fellow congressmen
Will back a righteous measure;
And now, my Edith Jane,—or then,—
Be thou my life-long treasure."

She chided not, nor drew aside,
But leaned her drooping tresses
Against his heaving heart, and sighed,
"I'll pay you in caresses."

So Boodle every wire did pull,
Rolled logs with all creation,
And piped our glorious Capitol
To push his legislation.

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Then galloped creaking to the door
That steed of legislation
Who nobly died in days of yore
To rise and munch the nation.

John Boodle scarcely caught his breath,
And pallid turned all faces,
To see that grinning horse of death
Curvet and show his paces.

The lady clapped an iron grip
Upon the bridegroom, saying,
"Away! begin your wedding trip!
The crisis grants no staying."

Oh, gladly had the Judge delayed
Another hour! till supper!
She mounted, beckoned; he obeyed,
And scrambled to the crupper.

One arm around his wife he threw,
Much longing for a saddle;
And then away, away, they flew
As fast as Hell could straddle.

The bridal feasters howled with fright,
The bridegroom bellowed louder;
But naught availed; adown the night
He darted, quick as powder.

He clutched his frightful charger's bones
To save himself from falling,
And rode with many twists and groans,
For fearful was the mauling.

Between the yellow ribs, the air
Sucked rawly with a whistle;
He looked behind, no tail was there
Except a point of gristle.

Grim riders joined them, fearful things,
Bent warlocks, withered witches,
Some scaling high on wilted wings,
Some shooting low on switches.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" the wizards bawled;
"Judge Boodle leads the rabble."
"Push on! push on!" the witches squalled;
"What fun to see him scrabble!"

At last, afar, yet drawing nigh,
He spied that monstrous scorcher,
The lake of Eblis burning high,
The red abyss of torture.

He strove to coax, he strove to chide,
He clamored hoarse and hoarser;
But nothing recked his fearful bride,
And nothing checked his courser.

The steed became a shooting star,
The wife became a devil;
And on they sped, the swiftest far
Of all the hell-bound revel.

He reached the lake, and leaped, and lit,
A flashing, ashing ember!
No more in Washington may sit
And spout and steal our member.

THE CANNIBAL CONQUEST.

The king of the Cannibal Islands
Decided to conquer some drylands ;
So he marched over valleys and highlands
With twenty-four cannibal braves ;
With two dozen man-eating knaves,
All hungry as so many graves,
He skirmished through earthlands and skylands,
Defiant of weather and waves.

He came to Atlantis the Holy
Whose burghers were lamblike and lowly,
Though growing a touch roly-poly
And languid in fasting and prayers.
They fasted while sleeping, like bears,
And prayed without leaving their chairs,
And walked in the narrow way slowly,
Much cumbered with Beelzebub's wares.

Then followed a wonderful battle ;
Good luck, how the cannons did rattle !
The women, the children, the cattle
Took part in the desperate strife.
They carried the war to the knife ;
With slaughter Atlantis was rife ;
About it the muses will prattle
While Jupiter granteth them life.

The Cannibals came out the winners,
They made twenty-five hearty dinners,
They gobbled the saints and the sinners,
And put all Atlantis to sack.

They spared neither yellow nor black,
The hungriest, greediest pack
Of robbers and pickers and skinners
That ever sent region to rack.

Henceforth they were chiefs of the nation
And lived by relief legislation;
They served up a bill for collation
And fattened a law like a beast.
Their appetites daily increased;
A lunch was a patent, at least,
While railroads and steam-navigation
Scarce furnished the joints for a feast.



PALESTINA



PALESTINA

THE BATTLE OF THE KINGS.

Chedorlaomer of Elam,
The eldest of conquering kings,
Established a mighty empire
In the grey beginning of things;
In the plain of the four great rivers
That come from fountains unknown,
In the paradise realm of Babel,
He set and established his throne.

Beside him thundered in battle,
And beside him reveled at feast,
Three monarchs who did him homage
For ancient domains in the east,
The king of the land of Shinar,
And the king of Ellasar's land,
And Tidal king of the tribesmen
Who wander the southern sand.

In the days of our father Abram
These four took counsel to smite
The citied vale of the Jordan
And the hills of the Amorite;

They gathered their tufted lances,
They gathered their crescent bows,
And quitted the templed valley
Where arrowy Hiddekel flows.

Athwart the mid-river desert
They spread their locust wings;
Devouring the green oases
And drinking a-dry the springs;
Devouring the shepherd nomads
And the smiths who dwell in caves;
Devouring the trains of merchants,
And leaving behind but graves.

The eastward border of Bashan
They harried with bow and spear;
They smote the giant Rephaim
And the Horite dwellers in Seir;
The Zuzim, sons of the giants,
And the Emim of Kiriathaim;
Yea, all the valley of Jordan
They reddened with blood and flame.

So warring bitterly onward
And filling the earth with wail,
They came to the Dead Sea cities,
The towns of the bitumen vale,
The cities Gomorrah and Sodom,
Renowned in cycles of old
For music and dance and revel,
And for treasure of silver and gold.

Now Birsha, king of Gomorrah,
Held feast in his tower of pride
With Bera tyrant of Sodom
And many a chief beside;
The table sparkled with goblets
Wrought by the Canaanite,
And the goblets bubbled over
With wine of amber light.

The dancers and dancing w
With wantoning smile an!
Wound slowly adown the m
Of Ashteroth's wicked dance:
While harp and organ and cymbal
And dulcimer poured their g'ee,
For the sons of Jubal were cumming
In lands of the bitumen sea.

But right in the midst of the joyance
A whimpering reached the hall,
As though the city Gomorrah
Were wailing already its fall;
And heralds shouted to Birsha
That Kadesh was flaming high,
And that up from the southland desert
Chedorlaomer drew nigh.

Then leaped up Birsha and Bera
With faces like withered leaves,
Forsaking the brimming goblets,
The flesh of sheep and of beeves;

PALESTINA.

They called for helmet and buckler,
For javelin, brand and bow,
And swiftly through scared Gomorrah
They hasted to meet the foe;

Commanding heralds to summon
Their allies, the king of Zoar,
And the kings of Zeboim and Admah,
Five kings to battle with four;
Commanding also to rally
And marshal their native powers,
And to set the phalanx of battle
In front of Gomorrah's towers.

Thereon, in the vale of Siddim;
In the vale of the marvellous mere,
Where now the apples are ashes
And the birds soar high in fear;
In the rich, hot Dead Sea valley
The clamor of war began,
The shock of nation with nation,
The wrestle of man with man.

Long wavered the balance even,
Four kings in battle with five;
For long did the brazen tempest
Both forward and backward drive;
For the men of the stranger peoples
Were valiant and trained to strife,
While the men of the Siddim cities
Were fighting for land and life.

At last the chief of the spoilers,
Chedorlaomer the strong,
Smote Birsha, king of Gomorrah,
With an arrow weighty and long,
That clove his glittering harness
And pierced his wicked heart,
On one side trembling the feather,
On one side gleaming the dart.

Thereon the sheikhs of the city,
Beholding their chieftain fall,
Tottered and tumbled asunder
Like stones of a battered wall;
While, smitten with menial terror,
The common herd turned to fly,
None fearing to stain his manhood,
But only fearing to die.

Then Tidal, king of the Nomads,
Led on his mingled breeds,
And parted the ranks of Sodom
As a lion parts Jordan's reeds;
The rush of his swarthy archers
Was like a hurricane's breath,
And the serpent hiss of their arrows
Fulfilled the noontide with death.

Back reeled the Sodomite bucklers,
King Shinab fell in his gore,
Back trembled the spear of Admah,
The sword of Zeboim and Zoar,

Till, smitten at every footstep,
The men of the valley fled,
With ear turned over the shoulder
To hear the pursuer's tread.

The bitumen pits of Siddim
Were choked with wounded and slain,
And the yellow ripples of Jordan
Bore many a crimson stain.
Right through the gates of the cities
The torrent of battle roared,
And tower and temple and palace
Re-echoed the clank of the sword.

The carven and molten idols
Saved not their worshippers then,
And the heathen altars were dabbled
With the blood of heathenish men,
While hither and yon the spoilers
Ran, gathering wealth untold
Of armor and goodly garments
And graven silver and gold.

Then perished the wise in counsel,
And perished the strong in war,
While the youths and maidens were herded
And driven to serve afar;
Yea, only a feeble remnant
A remnant goaded and pressed,
Escaped to the arid mountains
That shadowed the sunset west.

Now Lot, the nephew of Abram,
With sheep and cattle in store,
Wide feeding from mount to river,
Abode in the Siddim Ghor ;
In peace abode and in plenty
Till El should punish his sin
Of strife with our father Abram,
The chief of his clan and kin.

The patriarch's beard was lifted
In prayer and his knees were bent,
When the camel-riders of Tidal
Drew halter before his tent,
And leaned on their spears, awe-stricken,
Believing him half divine,
So august he seemed and holy,
And so did his countenance shine.

He knelt, but not to the foeman ;
He rose, but drew not his sword.
His soul was bowed in contrition :—
How should he strive with the Lord ?
Then Tidal, kissing his forehead,
Said, "Follow, O prophet and priest ;
And thou shalt serve at the altars
Of Bel in the templed east."

So gently the spoilers guided
The chief and his daughters twain,
His herders and flocks and cattle,
In honor along the plain ;

In honor and fear they led him,
Yet suffered him not to go,
For El had blinded their spirits
In order to work them woe.

Now messengers came to Abram,
Who held his pasture and fold
In the country of hoary Hebron,
By Hittites builded of old;
With garments rent and with weeping
They told how a stranger band
Was bearing Lot and his people
To Bel Merodach's land.

Then bowed the reverend ancient.
He bowed and prayed in grief,
"Now help us, El of the Hebrews;
Now guide us and be our chief.
Our foes are many and mighty;
They deafen the earth with boasts:
But thou canst give us the battle,
For thou art the Lord of Hosts."

This said, his glittering falchion
He girded on, and then
Led eastward his valiant herders,
Three hundred and eighteen men,
With Aner and Eshcol and Mamre,
Three clans of the Amorite,
Who banded with him in vengeance
For kinsmen slain in fight.

They passed the hilltop of Jebus,
Where Zion now lifts her wall;
They passed the mount of Gilboa
(Since red with the blood of Saul);
They entered the vale of Jordan
And forded the arrowy tide;
At last, in the skirts of Haran
The foeman's camp they spied.

Its countless fires of feasting
Flaunted an insolent glare,
And a clamor of drunken revel
Blasphemed through the twilit air,
The babble of heathen thousands
Who jeered at the captive's moan,
And scoffed at the God of Abram,
And vaunted their idols of stone.

Then said the chief of the Hebrews,
"God giveth them into our hand.
Divide ye quickly, my children,
Each ancient leading his band.
Lie close till the fires are feeble;
Then circle the Elamite horde.
Await my summoning trumpet;
Then strike in the might of the Lord."

In the thickest of night the signal
Of Abram shattered the gloom;
It roared through the plain like a lion,
It scared like the trumpet of doom;

While forward the ambushers bounded
Like hunters who close on the prey,
And sought the throats of the heathen,
And slew till the breaking of day.

Full many the sleepers who perished
Or ever they opened the eye,
Or wakened to gaze on the slayer
One terrible moment, and die.
Oh, mighty and swift was the slaughter;
It ran and consumed like a flame.
The corpses were piled upon corpses
Wherever the ambushers came.

And direr yet was the horror
When the rabble of pagans rose,
Drowsy and stumbling and groping,
To battle with unseen foes;
For comrade wrestled with comrade
And people with people strove,
While everywhither, at random,
The arrows of Tidal drove.

In vain the shouting of captains,
The scream of trumpets in vain;
In vain the kings of the nations
Clamored and beckoned amain;
For the very princes and nobles
Recked not of banner or crown,
And the soldiers, maddened with panic,
Went beating each other down.

Yea, even the glow of morning
Redoubled the crazed affright;
No fugitive turned to chasten
The handful that gored the flight;
The stricken host of the aliens
Dissolved and vanished like dew,
While fiercely our father Abram
Pursued, made captive and slew.

Past snowy Hermon he chased them
To Hobah, beyond the plain
Where ancient Damascus glitters
'Mid olives and figs and grain.
He gathered the beeves and camels
That the archers of Tidal drove,
And dried the tears of the orphan,
And brake the bonds of the slave.

But, gladdest of all his triumphs,
He rescued his brother's son,
His daughters and herders and cattle,
Not lacking a single one.
How beautiful were the kinsmen,
How princely in mien and face,
When, weeping, they kissed each other,
And honored El for his grace!

So Abram returned in glory
The hero of Jordan's land,
While shoutings of grateful peoples
Resounded on every hand;

Wherever he fared, the elders
 Of cities brought corn and wine,
Bowing their heads and revering
 The savior of Palestine.

And when to the hill of Hebron
 His lordly journey drew nigh,
Melchizedec, monarch of Salem,
 The priest of the Great Most High,
Came forth to meet him and greet him
 With holy hands lifted in praise,
Came forth to caress him, and bless him
 In the name of the Ancient of Days.

JOSEPH.

Superb in viceregal habiliments,
 With Pharaoh's ring on his hand,
He stood in the chamber of porphyry,
 The chief of the land.

Sedate, like a king, and yet tenderly
 He gazed in the wanderers' eyes,
While meekly they bended and timidly
 Looked up in surprise.

His father, the pastures of Palestine,
 The gladness of infancy's years,
Arose on his vision, and suddenly
 He melted in tears.

"Behold me, the darling of Israel!"
He cried. "Doth my father yet live?
Mourn not that ye sold me in slavery.
God rules. I forgive."

DELILAH.

The lady of Sorek, Delilah,
Was winsome and gladsome as day;
She smiled on the son of Manoah
And lured him to tread in her way;
Her kisses were sweeter than honey,
And she could betray.

She flattered the hero; she pleaded,
"Now tell me where lieth thy might."
He told her. She lulled him to slumber,
And shredded his hair in the night.
She opened the gate to her kinsmen,
And murmured, "Now smite!"

O daughter of aliens and strangers,
What child of Jehovah may stand
Who joys in the light of your glances
And loveth the touch of your hand!
His glory and gladness shall tumble
Like houses on sand.

GILBOA.

When Saul was king of Hebrews—
Alas, the heedless king!—
Our land was full of sorrows,
Our strength a feeble thing;
For Saul, the false and fickle,
Forgot the Lord's command
To hold in hate the heathen
And drive them from the land.

He spared the life of Agag,
Who ravaged Israel's coasts;
The sons of cruel Edom
Were captains in his hosts;
The bands of thievish Amalek
Bare Ephraim's lance and shield;
Yea, many were the aliens
Who marched with him afield.

Because of this his kingdom
Was rent with grievous ills;
The hordes of gentiles ravaged
Our fruitful vales and hills;
They stripped us and disarmed us
From Jordan to the mere;
Yea, scarce a man in Canaan
Had buckler, brand, or spear.

In all those days of battle
The fiercest of our foes
Were they who held the seacoast
That south to Egypt goes,

The pale and tall Philistim
Who came from Japheth's isles,
The men of brazen armor
Who charged in ordered files.

O princes of Philistia,
How often have ye shed
The lifeblood of our warriors
And robbed our babes of bread!
How often have ye herded
Our gracious youths for slaves,
And sold our tender maidens
Beyond the sunset waves!

And now again ye gather
To slaughter us like sheep;
Your tents are pitched in Shunem
Before Gilboa's steep;
Ye lift your gleaming bucklers
Against a naked swarm;
And Israel sees, affrighted,
Your serried phalanx form.

Yea, mighty was the terror
That shook our brothers' souls;
They lurked within Gilboa
Like foxes in their holes;
The hireling braves of Amalek
And Edom ceased to boast,
And even war-worn Abner
Was whiter than a ghost.

In vain our noble princes,
The warrior sons of Saul,
Went forth with smiling faces
And cheerly spake to all;
In vain the valiant Jonathan,
The kingliest of the three,
Said, "God hath often helped us;
So wherefore should we flee?"

No man of those who listened
Could muster heart of hope;
All eyes were set in anguish
On Shunem's brazen slope;
We heard across the valley
The foe's defiant cheer;
We saw, we heard, nor ever stirred
The livelong day for fear.

Yea, none would leave the mountain
Except the light-armed men;
And they set on but shyly,
And quickly turned agen.
Our slingers lurked in coverts
And cast with feeble throw,
While boldly shot the archers
Who drew the Cretan bow.

So passed a day of waiting
While each surveyed the field,
The foe secure of triumph,
Our hearts prepared to yield;

So passed a day of skirmish,
And when the sun went down,
No heart, I think, was sadder
Than his who wore the crown.

He sought a lonely thicket;
He bowed his head to earth.
“O El!” he prayed, “O Yahveh,
Who gave the Hebrews birth!
O Mighty One of Jacob
Who brought us from Misraim!
Adoniáh of battles,
I call upon Thy name!

“Thou heedest not our altars,
Though rich with fat and gore;
Thine oracles are silent,
Thy prophets speak no more;
And now thou helpest aliens
To drive us from our place.
O Yahveh of the Hebrews,
Why hidest thou thy face?

“Once more upon thy people
Let all thy mercies shine;
Send down some helping angel,
Accord some gracious sign;
Fulfill our hearts with valiance,
Strike dumb the heathens’ boasts;
And when we smite for Israel,
Be there, O Lord of Hosts!”

He prayed; but naught responded;
 No seraph flew anear;
 No brightness shone of Urim;
 No prophet brought him cheer;
 And when he sank in slumber
 God sent him dreams abhorred:
 He woke and cried in anguish,
 "I cannot find the Lord."

He rose; he changed his vesture;
 He laid his crown aside;
 He called his heathen henchmen,
 And through the night he hied.
 "I go to seek the wizards,"
 He muttered, mad with grief;
 "There was a God in Shiloh,
 But he is dead or deaf."

He rode; he came to Endor,
 Where dwelt a withered crone
 Who ruled familiar demons
 And showed the things unknown,—
 An evil crone who worshipped
 The gods of olden days
 When giants reared the temples
 Ye find in desert ways.*

The sky was hung with blackness,
 No aster pierced the night;
 Yet far away her cabin
 Revealed a spectral light,—

* Dolmens, menhirs and stone circles still exist in Palestine, especially in Gilead and Bashan.

GILBOA.

A light like that which glimmers
From wood of mouldered trees,
A light like that which chases
The galley through the seas.

He won the door and entered,
Yet found no taper there,
Nor ever knew what lustre
It was that rayed the air.
He stood with covered visage:
The beldame rose in dread.
“Why comest thou?” she queried.
“On thee be peace!” he said.

“Fear not, O cunning woman.
No man shall do thee harm.
I come to seek the spirits
Thou knowest how to charm.
Now use thy divinations,
However weird they be,
And summon him from Sheol
Whom I shall name to thee.”

She answered, “Lo, thou kennest
What Saul the king hath done,
How he hath slain my brethren,
The wizards, every one.
Of all who loved the demons
No creature lives but I.
Now wherefore dost thou purpose
A snare to make me die?”

"As El of Israel liveth,"
Replied the woful king,
No hurt shall come upon thee
For this or anything.
Now therefore speak the syllables
That even death can hear,
And call the awful spirit
Of Samuel, the Seer."

Her evil spells she muttered,
She wrought her magic might;
Then suddenly she uttered
A cry of great affright.
"Why seekest thou," she clamored,
"To lure me to my fall?
No common mortal art thou.
I know thee; thou art Saul."—

"Be not afraid," he bade her;
"What thing beholdest thou?"—
"I see the gods ascending
From earth," she said. "And now
I see behind them follow
An elder bent with years,
Whose mantle hides his visage,
As is the wont of seers."

Then quickly bowed the monarch,
He bowed upon his face,
For well he knew the prophet,
And much he craved his grace.

Alas, the king of sorrows!
How bitter was his dole
When sternly said the awful dead,
"Why troublest thou my soul?"

"Forgive me, O my father!"
Returned the stricken chief.
"The grave's repose is sacred,
But sacred too is grief.
I dared to vex thy slumber
Because our need is sore,
For Israel's foes are mighty
And Yahveh helps no more.

"The legions of Philistim
Have gathered like a flood;
To-morrow morn the battle
Will roll its robes in blood;
Our breasts are bare of harness,
Our bravest are dismayed,
And Jacob's stem will perish
Unless the Lord shall aid.

"In vain I seek his visage,
In vain my altars rise;
He answers not by Urim,
Nor dreams, nor prophesies;
Wherefore, thou mighty phantom,
I dare to break thy sleep,
And ask how Ephraim's shepherd
May save his feeble sheep."

Then said the seer of Sheol,
 "Why comest thou to me?
If God refuse his guidance,
 What guidance can there be?
Behold the Lord performeth
 According to his word;
The armies of the heathen
 Are but Jehovah's sword.

"Go forth to fight and perish!
 Death calls the mighty ones;
Yea, where I am thou comest,
 To-morrow, with thy sons,
Thy princes and thy captains
 And all the Hebrew band;
For El will help Philistia,
 And none can stay His hand."

Thus spake the bodeful phantom,
 And vanished into space,
While, crushed with grief, the fated chief
 Fell fainting on his face.
What king had ever sorrow
 So terrible as Saul,
Foredoomed to lose his people,
 His crown, his sons, his all?

Alas! his swooning passes;
 Its mercy may not stay;
He rises, mounts his courser
 And swiftly rides away.

He goes to death, yet hastens
Without a halt or moan;
He speeds to fall with Israel,
His children and his throne.

Gilboa glowed with sunrise
When battle climbed its height;
On spear and shield and corselet
Fell sweet the morning light.
How splendid were the warriors
Who charged the Hebrew hold!
Yea, glorious was Philistia
With brass and steel and gold.

From rock to thicket clamber
The lurking Cherethites;
Their feathered arrows whistle
In swift and deadly flights;
From covert on to covert
The cunning archers win,
And slowly drive before them
The slings of Benjamin.

Behind, the spearmen follow
In deep and steady ranks;
Their pikes are dense as thickets
Of reeds on Jordan's banks;
Their shields are locked together
In straight and burnished walls,
And all their feet keep even beat
To ringing trumpet-calls.

What could the sons of Jacob,
What could their fragile darts,
Their feeble wicker bucklers,
Their naked limbs and hearts,
Against Philistia's cohorts,
Complete in brazen gear,
Who pushed with comrade shoulders
The long and weighty spear?

In vain they hurled the javelin,
In vain they swung the brand,
Or crept within the pike-points
To struggle hand to hand.
The shield repelled the missile,
The helmet turned the sword;
And all the while each thickened file
Of spearmen thrust and gored.

On throve the panting phalanx,
With slow and toilsome tread;
But every forward footstep
Bestrode the mangled dead.
Down went the best and foremost
Of Ephraim's mighty ones;
Right in the front of battle
Died Saul's great-hearted sons.

Still sounding high his battle-cry,
Still lifting glaive to strike,
The good and valiant Jonathan
Received the heathen pike;

And striving hard to rescue
His body from the foe,
His youthful brothers perished,
Returning blow for blow.

Afar, their father knew not
That they had sunk to rest;
He led his lordly household
Against Philistia's best;
Except the ranks of foemen
He saw not anything;
His royal brazen trumpet
Made all the mountain ring:
"And if I die," he shouted,
"At least I die a king!"

At last one sped and told him
His darling ones were slain.
"Now death," he said, "is welcome.
O Hebrews, charge again!"
But vain his call for vengeance,
And vain his eager steel;
Down go his first and bravest,
And back their comrades reel.

Back, fighting, bleeding, dying,
The Hebrews reeled in rout,
While forward strove the heathen
With stern, exulting shout.
All over Mount Gilboa
The greaved Achaean slew;
All over Mount Gilboa
The Cretan arrow flew.

Sore hampered by the tumult
Of bloody flight and chase,
The woful king of Israel
Drew back a little space ;
Retired, yet often halted,
Unwilling yet to yield,
Though none remained to help him
But him who bare his shield.

Hard after him the archers
Pursued with twanging bow ;
In vain he whirled his falchion
And laid the boldest low ;
They rallied and they volleyed,
They beat upon him sore ;
And soon his burnished armor
Was dimmed with trickling gore.

So, seeing that his battle
Was drawing to its end,
He called to him who followed,
“Come hither, faithful friend !
Prevent the heathens’ boasting ;
Prevent their bow and spear.
Strike quickly ! Strike and slay me
Before they draw anear !”

“Nay,” wept the loyal servitor ;
“I cannot smite my lord.”—
Then bared the king his bosom,
And fell upon his sword ;

Nor deigned the armor-bearer
To draw one further breath ;
And there Philistia found them,
Secure and grand in death.

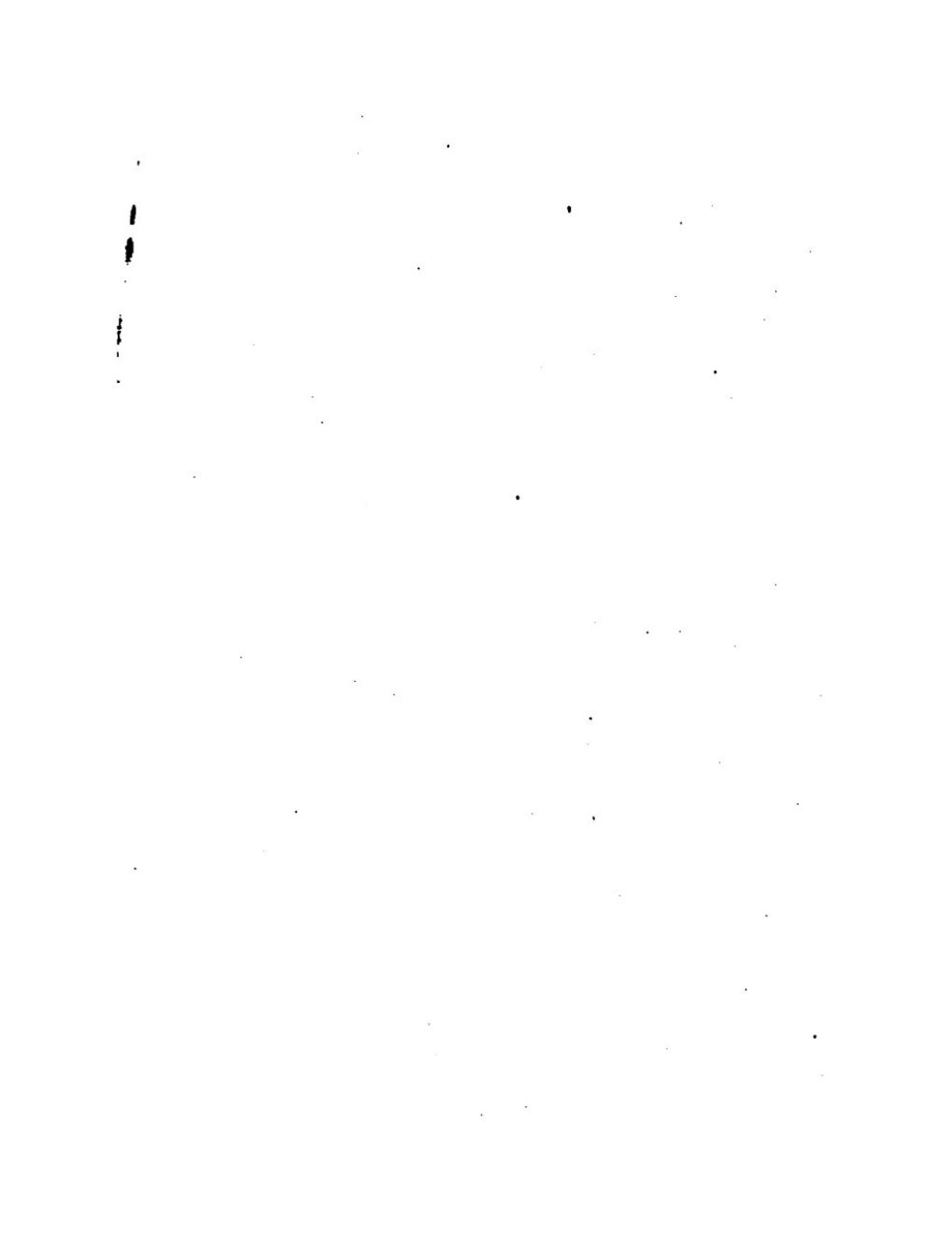
Ye mountains of Gilboa,
Let neither rain nor dew
Bedeck your lofty places
Nor tint your dells anew ;
For there the blood of heroes
Was trampled into clay,
The buckler of the mighty
Was vilely cast away.

The beauteous ones of Israel
Are slain upon your heights.
How are the lofty fallen,
The chiefs of many fights !
Oh, tell it not in Askalon !
From Gath withhold the voice !
Lest Dagon's prophets triumph
And Dagon's maids rejoice.

Weep, daughters of the Hebrews,
For Saul, the gracious king,
Who decked you fair with scarlet
And golden chain and ring !
For him and for his princes,
The eagles of our pride,
Who lived in lovely concord
And undivided died !



THE PASTOR



THE PASTOR.

The Vision.

In thoughts of the visions of night,
When slumber possessed me,
My spirit was seized with affright
And horrors oppressed me.

A phantom appeared to my eyes,
A vapor of error;
I could not discover its guise,
I saw but a terror.

The darkness with silence was shod;
A voice queried lowly:
"Shall mortals be juster than God?
More pure than the Holy?

"In angels He putteth no trust,
They tremble before Him;
How then may the creatures of dust
Approach to implore Him?

"They vanish from morning to eve,
They perish like stubble;
And none who regardeth will grieve,
Or succor their trouble.

"Their excellence fadeth to naught,
Their gladness to sorrow ;
And even the wisdom they taught
Lasts not till the morrow."

The Despondent.

My days are swifter than a steed ;
They find no joy and flee away,
Like eagles hastening to the prey,
Or galleys winged with stormy speed.

I would that I had died in birth,
That I had fallen unto death,
Before I learned to love my breath,
Or tasted one delight of earth.

I should have been as one unborn ;
I should have flyted to the tomb,
Unheeding of my early doom
As any moth of summer morn.

Are not my days a feeble few ?
Cease then from troubling ! Stand apart,
And let me take some little heart
Before I sink beyond the view ;

Before I go to sombre lands
Where blindness sits ; to lands of night,
Where darkness is the only light,
And Sheol lifts obscuring hands.

The Human.

His days are few and full of woe:
He springs and burgeons like a flower:
The sickle finds him ere an hour:
He goeth as the shadows go.

The flower may win a second birth:
But man is dead and vanisheth:
He sighs away his feeble breath,
And who can find him on the earth?

His children grow to power and fame;
They fall to grievous want and sin:
He sleeps his narrow grave within,
Nor cares for all their grace or shame.

He sinks to rest and will not rise:
The firmament shall pass away;
But still he sleeps in calm decay,
And none can make him lift his eyes.

Oh, that thou mightest hide me fast,
Conceal me, fold me safe in gloom,
Yea, draw the curtains of my tomb,
Until thy judgments hasten past!

The Redeemer.

Have pity on me, O my friends!
A mighty hand hath touched me sore.
Why should ye chasten more and more
A man whose sorrow never ends?

Ye sit upon the judgment seat;
As gods ye judge and persecute:
And I, shall I be meek and mute,
Like one whose pulse hath ceased to beat?

I would that all my words were writ
On graven rock or lettered page,
That they might last from age to age,
And men might read them every whit.

I know that my Redeemer bides;
I know that in the latter days
His feet shall stand in earthly ways
And search the glooms where sorrow hides.

Yea, though I sleep beneath the sod,
Though worms destroy this strength and bloom,
Yet I shall part the shrouding tomb,
And see my Savior, see my God;

Shall see him for myself alone,
And not with eyes of other men;
Shall look upon His glory when
He lifts me to His gracious throne.

The Fall of the Evil.

The evil grow to wealth and might;
Their kindred prosper in their sight;
Their sons inherit long delight.

Their tables groan with costly cheer;
Their hearts are fenced away from fear;
God toucheth not their plenteous gear.

They take the timbrel, pipe and lyre;
Their voices rise in gladsome choir;
The children dance before the sire.

They say to God, "Depart! away!
We hate thy way and flout thy sway.
What profits us to fast and pray?"

They love the law of carnal sense;
They spend their days in opulence;
Then eftersoon they vanish hence.

They cannot keep their faces hale,
Nor bear their wealth beyond the veil,
But fly like chaff before the gale.

In vain ye seek their dwelling place,
The lofty towers, the halls of grace,
The mansions of the princely race.

Long since they vanished from the spot;
Their very glory is forgot;
Men answer back, "We know them not."

The Divine.

On dizzy altitudes he stands ;
Dominions glitter in His hands ;
His terrors march in awful bands.

Who knoweth how to count His hosts ?
His mornings shine on all the coasts ;
His glances pierce the realm of ghosts.

He looks upon the moon as dim ;
In vain the starry oceans brim ;
They seem but darkling voids to Him.

How then should man, the child of dust,
Lift Edenward a brow of trust
Or vaunt himself as pure and just ?

His worth is vile, his strength infirm ;
He carries death within the germ ;
Behold, he seemeth but a worm.

THE BARD



THE BARD.

The Gracious.

O Name all names excelling!
Jehovah! secret name!
Thou hast Thy wondrous dwelling
Above the midday flame.

When I behold Thy wonders,
The marvels of Thy hands,
The temple of Thy thunders,
The moon and starry bands,

Lo, what is man, the human,
That Thou dost grant him grace?
Yea, man the son of woman,
That Thou dost turn Thy face?

Yet Thou hast made him master
Of air and earth and sea,
And crowned his head with lustre,
Viceregal under Thee.

In honor and in station
Scarce less than seraphim,
He ruleth Thy creation
Because Thou lovest him.

O God all gods excelling,
How vast Thy mercies are!
Thy power is past all telling,
Thy grace is greater far.

The Deliverer.

How long wilt Thou forget me,
My Lord? Forever?
How long shall woes beset me,
And spare me never?

Alas, Thy face is hidden,
O King immortal!
I stand and knock, forbidden
To pass Thy portal.

My soul is clothed in sadness;
I perish daily;
My foes are crowned with gladness,
And jeer me gaily.

Behold, my footsteps totter
Without foundation;
I walk like one on water,
Nor find salvation.

Consider now and hear me,
O Mighty! Cherish
My fainting life, and cheer me,
Lest I should perish.

O gracious one, my Savior,
I will not quiver,
Nor swerve, nor change behavior,
But serve Thee ever.

The Protector.

God bring thee out of harm,
And God be Thy defender!
God show thee that His arm
Is strong and also tender!

He sees thine altar fire,
Thy gift, thine offered treasure,
And grants thee thy desire.
Fulfilled beyond thy measure.

Rejoice, O friends, in Him
Who breaks the bands of sadness;
Let all your banners swim
Above your mounts of gladness.

I know that God alone
Can rescue them that perish;
He bendeth from His throne
To seek, to save, to cherish.

Trust not in spear and glaive,
Nor courser shod with terror,
For steeds are vain to save,
And battles reel in error.

Our savior is the Lord
Who rides upon the thunder;
And when He lifts his sword
The nations fall asunder.

The Avenger.

Make haste, my King, to deliver;
 Make haste to aid me, my Lord;
 Confound and scatter and shiver
 All those who hold me abhorred;

 All those who weary my soul,
 Who chase me with bow and quiver;
 Confound their evil endeavor
 And bring them to dole.

Yea, those who grin and who chatter,
 Who follow with scoffing and leer,
 Disperse them, O Helper, and scatter,
 Confound and fill them with fear!

But those who seek Thee in sadness,
 Who wait for thy coming, in grief,
 Make haste, O Giver of gladness,
 To grant them relief.

Be swift to aid me, my Lord;
 Be swift, O Strong, to deliver;
 I hold, I cling, to thy word,
 And trust Thee forever.

The Splendor of Jehovah.

Jehovah reigns!
 O earth, bloom forth in smiles;
 Be glad, ye rivers, hills and plains;
 Rejoice, O multitude of isles!

He reigns alone,
Around Him folding clouds and night;
The dwelling-places of His throne
Are justice and eternal right.

Before Him runs a fire
That burneth up his foes;
His lightning through creation goes,
And earth recoils before his ire;
Yea, hills and mountains melt apace
Beneath the splendor of His face.

The heavens declare His holiness;
The nations see His glory shine;
The heathen bow in humbleness;
The gods of every alien shrine
Acknowledge Him divine.

Jerusalem makes mirth;
Her daughters sing in sweet accord
Because Thou comest, Lord,
To judge the earth.
For high above the world art Thou,
Yea, high above the skies
And greater than the graven lies
Whereto the heathen bow.

O ye who love His name,
I pray you hate all sinfulness;
So shall He guard when foemen press,
And save your souls from flame.

The righteous walk in fields of light,
In pastures lit by dazzling suns;
Yea, wondrous beams of glory smite
The ways of upright ones.

O spirits pure and lowly,
Rejoice! make jubilee!
For Yahveh giveth you to see
How great He is and holy.

The Unchangeable.

My heart is smitten very sore,
My soul is withered like the grass,
My days like driven vapor pass,
Or bubbles breaking 'gainst the shore.

I wander with the desert birds,
I bide among the owls of night,
While sons of evil brave the light
And deafen earth with haughty words.

Because of Thee my drink is tears,
And ashes are my daily bread—
Because Thine anger flameth red
Against the sins that mark my years.

But Thou wilt turn again to save
The children of Thy holy hill;
And all the cruel Sires of ill
Shall cringe before thy shining glaive.

Thy glances pierce the morning's breath;
Thou bendethest from Thine azure throne
To hear the captive's whispered moan
And free the spirits led to death.

Of old, beyond our feeble thought,
Before the ages came to be,
Thy fingers made the earth and sea,
Thy hand the astral spaces wrought.

Lo these, the wonders of thy power,
Shall fall like garments to decay;
Their stateliness shall pass away,
And Thou shalt change them in an hour.

But Thou, O Father, art the same;
Thy wondrous, dazzling years endure;
And they shall stand rejoiced, secure,
Who love the beauty of Thy Name.

The Merciful.

I will extol Thee, O my King,
Forever with uplifted face;
Forever magnify Thy grace,
While harp can sound or voice can sing.

Thy works adore Thee, stars and suns,
The stable earth, the flying storms,
The broods unborn, the living swarms,
The multitude of sainted ones.

We fall; we grovel in the dust;
Because of sin we cannot stand;
Yet dost Thou reach a loving hand,
As though our sorrow made us just.

The eyes of all look up to Thee:
Because we hunger we are fed:
And if Thou gavest not Thy bread,
How soon our life would cease to be!

But chiefly those who seek Thy throne
Discover that Thy love is sweet:
They never walk with stumbling feet;
They never walk, O Lord, alone.

Adoration.

Ye broods of deserts, isles and wildernesses,
Ye monsters of the den,
Ye gentle flocks and herds whose tribute blesses
The toil of men;

Ye finny habitants of rills and fountains,
Ye songsters of the breeze,
Ye vales, ye oaken hills, ye cedar mountains,
Ye fruitage trees;

I bid ye praise the Maker who upbuilded
Creation's wondrous frame,
Who jewelled night with galaxies, and gilded
The sun with flame.

Ye also, sons of Adam, all ye nations
Of regions far and nigh,
Exalt your antiphon of adorations
To God most high.

Let all adore, the monarch robed in splendor,
The sage with hoary hair,
The mighty man of war, the stripling tender,
The maiden fair;

Ungovernable tempests, fierce commotions,
Of fire and sleet and foam;
Abysses, awful deeps, mysterious oceans
Where dragons roam;

O azure-tinted firmament of waters,
Of thunder, wind and fire;
O sun and moon, O starry sons and daughters
Of God's desire;

O seraphim and angels, bowing lowly
Around the blinding throne;
I bid you praise the Maker, great and holy,
And Him alone.



THE BURDEN OF SAMARIA



THE BURDEN OF SAMARIA.

Jeroboam.

O Israel, hearken to me!
Said Jeroboam, the king;
Go not to Zion to bend the knee!
Said the son of Nebat, the king.

A golden Apis I make in Dan,
An Apis of gold in Beth-El;
So bear your offerings, every man,
To them, and all will be well.

Gods are they who brought your sires
From Egypt in days agone;
So gather about their altar fires
And worship from eve to dawn.

I burn the incense, I am the priest,
Said Jeroboam, the king;
O Ephraim, come to my holy feast,
Said the son of Nebat, the king.

Ahijah's Curse.

The blinded seer, the Shilonite,
Ahijah, worshipped Yahveh's name;
And when the queen of Israel came,
An angel brought him second-sight.

"Approach!" he bade, "and bow the knee!
 I know thee, wife of Ephraim's king;
 I know the query thou dost bring.
 Go, bear thy husband God's decree.

"'Because thou floutest Me,' He saith;
 'Because thou madest gods of gold,
 And leddest Jacob from my fold,
 I summon Nebat's sons to death;

"'The dog shall tear them in the street,
 The vulture tear them in the field;
 Their bones shall whiten, unconcealed,
 Beneath the scorn of alien feet.'

"And thou, O weeping mother, fly
 To find thy stricken one alive;
 Yet even while thy steps arrive
 Beneath thy portal, he shall die."

Elijah's Curse.

O son of Omri, Ahab, king
 In Jacob! evil hast thou done
 Above the kings before thee. None
 Have served like thee the Cursed Thing.

O son of Omri, was it well
 To worship molten calves, but thou
 Must also diadem the brow
 Of Sidon's heathen Jezebel?

Moreover, thou hast let her rave
 Against Jehovah's faithful seers
 Till I alone, a child of tears,
 Have 'scaped the slayer's bloody glaive.

Yea, lofty stones of Ashtar, and
 A fane to Sidon's brazen Boast,
 And altars to the starry host
 Beside thine ivory palace stand.

Wherefore, O king, Jehovah saith,
 I send thee neither rain nor dew
 For years, till Israel shall rue
 His wanton ways, and long for death.

Carmel.

The Holy One of Shiloh bade:
 "Elijah, speak to Ephraim's king,
 And I, the merciful, will bring
 My rain anew on hill and glade."

And Ahab railed: "Art thou the man
 Who troubles thirsting Israel?"—
 "Not I, but Sidon's Jezebel;
 Not I, but Omri's heathen clan."

"Why should the Highest bless a fold
 That turns from Him to ways of death,
 Adoring Baal and Ashtoreth
 And Jeroboam's beasts of gold?

"Why should He pour His fruitful rain
 Upon the realm of her who drove
 His faithful seers from cave to cave,
 And spilled their blood on mount and plain?

"Now gather thou on Carmel all
 The prophets of the starry horde
 And Arbel's queen and Sidon's lord;
 Yea, whoso scoffs at Yahveh's call.

"And they shall cry to gods of stone,
 And I to El's eternal name;
 And whoso sends consuming flame,
 The earth shall hail him God alone."

* * * * *

O fire of Heaven! Sinai's breath!
 Elijah's altar blazes high!
 The priests of Baal and Ashtar lie
 By Kishon's river, dumb in death.

Then wailed the Canaanitish queen:
 "O gods infernal! Death and Fear!
 Avenge me on this bloody seer!
 Or slay me also, gods unseen!"

The Death of Ahab.

To Yahveh's prophet Ahab cried:
 "Shall Ephraim's host to battle go,
 And Judah lift the spear and bow
 Against Benhadad's armored pride?"

"Yea, go and prosper," scoffed the seer.

"Have not the oracles of Baal
Assured thee triumph over all?
Why seekest thou the future here?

"But canst thou bear Jehovah's word?
I saw thy people scattered far,
Like sheep upon a mountain scar:
And, 'These are masterless!' I heard."

So Ahab changed his broidered cloak,
And laid his golden armor by;
Then raised his lordly battle-cry,
And through the ranks of Syria broke.

A nameless Aramean drew
A random arrow, aimed by chance;
But Yahveh winged the fragile lance,
And smote the jointed harness through.

Thereon the king: "O charioteer,
Turn thou aside, for I must die;
But let no soldier come anigh,
Lest Ephraim yield in panic fear."

At even, when the chariot fled,
The king alone knew not defeat.
His warder stayed him in his seat,
Erect and proud. The king was dead.

Jezebel at the Window.

She decked herself with chain and ring,
 She rouged her cheek and tyred her fleece,
 Yet ever shrilled, "Had Zimri peace?
 Had Zimri peace who slew his king?"

She trembled not at treason's horde,
 She fronted Jehu's lion eye,
 Nor ceased to shriek that boding cry,
 "Had Zimri peace who slew his lord?"

"Ho there, above! who stands for me?"
 The slayer clamored: "Fling her down!" * * *
 O Sidon's lineage! Ephraim's crown!
 O what a fall was there to see!

Her royal blood besprinkled horse
 And wheel and wall and trampling foot;
 Her gracious beauty gorged the brute
 That snarled above her queenly corse.

Hosea's Curse.

Ephraim forgetteth Sinai's El,
 And buildest fanes to calves of gold;
 His Baalim-stones are manifold,
 His altars burden hill and dell.

Yet shall he tremble with affright
 Because of the shame of Beth Aven,
 Where batten the vulture and raven,
 And smoke of offering dims the sight.

Beth Aven, sin of Israel, cry!
Thy shafts of Ashteroth shall fall,
And thorn and thistle cover all
The altars where thy Baalim lie.

Behold, thy glory disappears!
The idols of Jacob are shattered,
The hosts of Samaria scattered,
And none shall dry the captive's tears.

The Ninevite shall tread your land.
Your palaces shall hear his mirth,
And you shall bring your children forth,
And give them to the slayer's hand.



THE STORY OF JERUSALEM



THE STORY OF JERUSALEM.

The Messenger.

I saw the Mighty on His throne,
Uplifted, awful, beautiful,
His angels round him thronging full
The temple to its topmost stone.

Above Him soared the seraphim
With pinions folded o'er the face
Because the brightness of the place
Might make immortal senses swim.

Then one invisible to me
(So dazzled was I by the flame),
Cried, "Holy, holy is his name!
His glory covers earth and sea."

Meanwhile the brazen gateways reeled
And all the temple rocked in smoke,
So mighty was the voice that spoke,
So fearful was the sight revealed.

Then said I, "Woe is me! undone!
Because I am a man unclean;
And yet my sinful eyes have seen
The Lord of hosts, the Holy One."

Thereon a seraph flew anear
And laid upon my lips a coal:

"Lo this hath purified thy soul
And made thee worthy to be here."

Then where the glory folded high
A heavenly voice responded low :
"Who is my herald? Who will go?"—
I answered : "Send me! Here am I."

The Message.

O land of carven imageries,
Where every man doth hew his god,
And every forehead beats the sod
Before the dumb and sightless lies!

The peasant worships in his cot,
The lordling in his pictured hall;
They turn from Thee, both great and small;
Therefore, my God, forgive them not.

The anger of the Lord is rolled
On all the arrogant and proud,
The steeds and chariots clanking loud,
The stores of silver and of gold;

The groves of terebinth and oak
Where Baal delights in dance and song,
And Moloch scowls upon his throng
Of worshippers through flame and smoke;

The beetling towers and battlements,
The marble courts and palaces,
The ships of Tarshish cleaving seas
From isles of gum and frankincense.

In that affrighted day shall men
Cast out their idols to the moles,
And hide within the mountain holes,
And fight with monsters for a den.

For terribly shall God descend
Upon the wicked, wicked earth
To sweep it like a besomed hearth
Till Judah's strong delusions end.

The Curse.

The righteous dieth day by day,
The merciful is borne apart;
And none receiveth it to heart,
Or saith, "Behold they 'scape away."

They 'scape from cruelty and stress;
They enter into perfect calm;
They sleep upon their beds of balm,
Each folded sweet in holiness.

But you, the sons of pagan shame,
Vile heritors of breeds perverse,
Draw near and hearken to the curse
That God hath bidden me proclaim.

O brood unholy, evil born,
Ye mock the voice that angels fear,
Ye thrust the tongue in wicked leer,
Ye open wide a mouth of scorn.

On every hill ye worship lies,
In every grove ye mutter spells,
And slay your sons in bloody dells
To gods who cannot hear their cries.

In rivulets of glen and cave
Ye pour your offerings of wine,
And call the senseless flints divine
That glimmer through the senseless wave.

Shall I rejoice, Jehovah saith,
In rites and blasphemies like these,
In dances underneath the trees,
And chants upon the mountain heath?

Behold, when foemen mount your wall,
And ye discern your temples blaze;
When slaughter reddens all your ways,
And spoilers run from hall to hall;

When judgment overtakes your crime,
And ye beseech me from the dust;
Let those deliver whom ye trust,
The tempest-driven sons of time!

The Judgment.

Thus sayeth Jehovah, the Lord:
Go speak to the mountains of Zion,
Yea, cry to the valleys and waters:
Behold, I arrive with a sword,
Behold, I come up like a lion;
I come to destroy your high places,
To spoil and defile them with slaughterers.
Your idols shall fall on their faces,
Your altars shall totter and crumble,
Your soothsaying prophets shall die,
And there, where your graven gods **tumble**,
The slain of your people shall lie.
The hand of my fury shall blight
And wither and utterly humble
The oaks of your heathen delight,
The beautiful groves that ye cherish.
The breath of my anger shall waste
Your armies with sudden affright
And fill your strongholds with amaze.
Your populous cities shall perish,
The warders shall fall in their haste,
Shall stumble and die in their flight
And cumber with corpses the ways.
Yea, mingled with imageries shattered
In temples and groves and by waters;
Yea, piled around altars bespattered
By victims of Baalim abhorred;
The bones of your sons and your **daughters**
Shall whiten unburied and scattered,
To witness that I am the Lord.

The Fast.

"Behold," the sons of Judah say,
"How many solemn fasts we hold!
How many contrite psalms are rolled!
And yet He turns his face away."

Alas! ye fast for hate and strife,
To smite with cruel fist the poor,
And drive the beggar from the door
That guards your light and pampered life.

Is this the fast that God decrees,
A day for man to scourge his soul
And bow in counterfeited dole
Like rushes smitten by the breeze?

What boots it though ye crawl and weep,
In sackcloth hiding garments fair,
And sprinkle cinders on the hair,
All day upon the ashen heap?

Behold the fast that God ordains:
To break the yoke of wickedness;
To ease the burden of distress;
To loose the slave's and debtor's chains;

To lead the houseless one within;
To cheer his fainting soul with bread;
To clothe him, warm him, in thy stead;
To be a brother to thy kin.

Then, when thou askest any boon,
Thy God will answer, "Here am I!"
His sun will rise upon thy sky,
And all thy darkness turn to noon.

The City of Destruction.

Woe, woe to the city imperial,
The delicate city!
There cometh a shadow funereal,
A doom without pity.

Thy daughters walk pertly and haughtily;
They mince as in dances;
They bridle the neck; they turn naughtily
With wantoning glances.

Thine ancients are misers, usurious;
Thy judges are knavish;
Thine opulent ones are luxurious;
Thy mean ones are slavish.

Thy magistrates creep in senility;
Thy prophets dissemble;
Thy counsellors babble sterility;
Thy men of war tremble.

Thou wast altogether victorious
When God was thy pleasure;
Thy visage was shining and glorious,
Thy joy had no measure.

But now art thou wayward, undutiful
To Him, thy salvation ;
And so art thou blemished, unbeautiful,
A doom-stricken nation.

Because thou hast borne thee exultingly
And trampled the lowly ;
Because thou hast chattered insultingly
Of things that are holy ;

Because thou despiseth admonishment
And holdest to error ;
Thy judgment shall be an astonishment,
Thy scourging a terror.

The Chambers of Imagery.

I saw the image of the Name.
The loins and robe were amber bright,
The waist was girt about with light,
And all above was dazzling flame.

It reached the likeness of a hand,
And bore me 'twixt the earth and sky
To where an idol brazens nigh
The holy fane of Judah's land ;

And showed me all the evil ways
Of Zion, lost in unbelief,
And wandering from grief to grief,
From guilt to guilt, in blinded maze.

I saw the under courts of sin,
The hidden shrines of carven lies,
The darkling vaults of imageries,
And Judah worshipping therein;

The chosen ancients of our race,
The hallowed seventy, kneeling there,
With solemn eyes and silver hair,
While incense clouded all the place;

Judean maids with humbled head
And ashen locks and rended vest,
Who cut the arm and beat the breast
In wicked wail for Tammuz dead;

Yea, men within the holy gate,
Who reverenced the star of day,
And turned their senseless gaze away
From Yahveh's choir and templ'd state.

Then said the Holy One, "Behold!
Thou seest what my people do:
Therefore I will not spare nor rue,
But smite them fiercely, young and old."

The Warning.

Storm out, ye trumpeters of death!
Along my holy mountain, blow!
Awaken larums wild with woe!
Blow, cruel trumpets! spare no breath!

For lo, Jehovah's day of might
Is nigh: a day of bitter doom:
A day of darkness and of gloom:
Of thickened clouds and heavy night.

Like morning mists, that overspread
The mountains, comes a northern swarm,
A people great and fierce, whose form
The living knew not, nor the dead.

Before their swiftness rolls a smoke;
Behind them angry flamings rise;
Before, the land is Paradise;
Behind, a waste devoid of folk.

Their guise is like to steeds who stride
And foam along the front of wars;
Their clamor, like to leaping cars
That thunder down the mountain side.

As mighty ones they run apace,
As chosen ones they mount and climb;
Each keeps his even rank and time,
Nor ever falters from his place.

They scale the battlemented walls,
They speed along the city streets;
Behold them in your fair retreats!
Behold them in your lordly halls!

The earth recoils before their tread,
The sun and moon withdraw their light,
The starry armies faint in night,
The hollow welkins reel in dread.

Wherefore, renounce your ways of ill,
O house of Judah! Turn! Repent
With eager fasting and lament!
Perhaps your God will pardon still.

The Spoiler.

I bring destruction—hear, O land!—
I bring destruction on your race,
Because ye turn away the face,
Because ye scoff at my command.

What care I for your honeyed cane,
Your smoke of Sheba's frankincense?
Go, take your sacrifices hence!
Your loaded altars burn in vain.

Behold, I lay a stumbling stone
Before you; all shall perish, all;
The fathers and the sons shall fall;
The friend, the comrade; every one.

A people hastens from afar
To desolate your might and mirth;
It journeys from the sides of earth
To seek and overtake and mar.

Their hearts are merciless to slay;
They clamor like the ocean storm;
They brandish bow and lance; they swarm
On horses ranked in war array.

Be fearful; hold within the gate;
Avoid the harvests of your field;
They hide the foeman's sword and shield;
On every side the slayers wait.

O daughter of my people, cry!
Cry out with ashes on your head,
Like one bewailing o'er the dead,
For lo, the spoiler draweth nigh!

The Siege.

I seek the fields, the gardens fair,
And stumble o'er the bloody slain;
I creep within the gates again,
And lo, they die of famine there.

The prophet wanders in amaze,
As one who gropeth with the hand;
He knoweth not his native land,
He findeth not the ancient ways.

Why hast Thou scorned Jerusalem,
And hated all Thy holy hill?
Why hast Thou smitten us, until
No hand may heal the broken stem?

We know our wickedness, O Lord,
The wickedness of son and sire;
Yet veil Thy countenance of ire,
Nor hold us evermore abhorred.

Because of Thy majestic name,
Because Thy throne is glorious,
Break not Thy covenant with us,
Thy prostrate people, clothed in shame.

Overthrow.

I looked upon the earth; and lo
A hollow void where life was spent;
I looked upon the firmament,
And saw nor sun nor aster glow.

The hills were stricken to their fall,
The mountains reeled like driven waves;
Mankind had vanished into graves,
And silence brooded over all.

The melodists of morn had failed,
The fragrant gardens lay a-waste;
The haughty cities were abased
To ruins, where the owlet wailed.

Because of rushing steeds, and din
Of archers, they arose in flight
To fen and wold and rocky height,
Nor any man remained therein.

Yea, scattered were they; hurled before
The coming of the Lord of hosts;
His anger quelled their swelling boasts
And swept them like a besomed floor.

"Because I purposed it," he saith,
"Because I promised in my wrath,
I will not turn upon my path,
Nor sorrow when they sink to death.

"Because I prophesied their doom,
The land shall lie a wilderness,
The earth shall mourn in sore distress,
The firmament be veiled in gloom."

Unsepulchred.

The glory of the land hath ceased
And scornful hands bring forth the bones
Of those who sate on Judah's thrones,
The bones of noble, seer and priest;

To scatter them before the host
Of shining heaven, the sun of noon,
The multitude of stars, the moon,
The senseless gods they worshipped most;

And none shall see with pity; none
Shall hide them from the prowling brute;
But they shall lie beneath the foot
Without a covering or stone;

While those who lurk in mountain caves,
The remnant of an evil tribe,
Lean forth with bitter scowl and gibe,
Curse God and men, and pray for graves.

The Sorrowful City.

How doth the city bide alone
That lately rang with multitudes,
A queen among the gentile broods,
A princess glorious on her throne!

She weepeth sorely through the night,
Her tears disguise her smitten face;
She wins no comforting nor grace
From those who called her their delight.

Her foes pursued her flying tread
And caught her 'mid the narrow ways;
She bowed her head in pale amaze;
In alien lands she bows her head.

The hallowed streets of Zion moan
Because her solemn feasts are spent;
Her gates are void, her towers rent,
Her virgins weep, her prophets groan.

Because her sins were manifold
Her children bear the heathen's chain,
Her adversaries thrive amain,
Her spoilers riot uncontrolled.

The Lament.

Remember, Jehovah, our strait,
Remember our noyance.
The elders have failed from the gate,
The youths from their joyance.

Our fathers have sinned, and are not,
We bear their offences;
The stranger inherits our lot,
The foe our defences.

Our princes are tortured and slain,
Our daughters win scorning;
Our triumph hath ended in pain,
Our dances in mourning.

The temple of God is defaced,
The temple of Zion;
Our beautiful hill is a waste
For foxes to lie on.

Thy kingdom remaineth, O Lord,
Forever and ever;
Why needest Thou hold us abhorred
And pardon us never?

Behold us, O God, we implore.
Behold us in pity;
Restore thy sad people; restore
Thy sorrowing city.

By the Rivers of Babylon.

Beside Babylonian waters
We halted; we rested unsleeping;
We hushed; we remembered the slaughterers
Of Zion; remembered them weeping.

We covered our sorrowing faces,
Remembering Zion the splendid,
Her grandeurs, her delicate graces,
Now smitten and trampled and ended.

With sobbing and tears we remembered,
And hung up our harps on the willows
For beautiful Canaan dismembered,
For Judah gone down in the billows.

And they who destroyed us, whose fury
Had ravined and torn like a lion,
Said, "Sport ye, O captives of Jewry;
Now sing us the anthems of Zion."

Ye cruel! our anthems are praises
To God; they are joyous as bridals.
How may we attune the sweet phrases
To chains, amid aliens and idols?

Jerusalem, should I forget thee,
Thou ruin that Babel disdaineth,
Or fail but a moment to set thee
Above every joy that remaineth;

Then perish the hand that hath holden
The harp while our choruses thundered!
And perish the cadences golden
That billowed till Israel wondered!

The Vision of The Glory.

I

I sate with those who sighed
In bonds abhorred
Beside the Chebar's alien tide,
And saw the heavens cloven wide,
And saw the vision of the Lord.

II .

Behold a northern hurricane
Whereon a monstrous cloud did sit.
Infolding whirls of fiery rain
With amber in the midst of it,
While brightness girdled all again.

III

From out the flying :torm
Of circling flame
And luminous amber color, came
Four wondrous living creatures,
Alike to Adam's sons in form
But other far in features ;
For each beheld with fourfold eyes
And showed a fourfold face,
One countenance of human grace,
The others lordly beasts in guise,
Expressing things beyond surmise.

IV

On fourfold wings they sped
Straight forward, never turning,
Suffused with gleams from foot to head
Like coals of altars glowing red,
Or golden lamps a-burning,
While issued from the spangled splendor
Incessant lightnings keen and slender.

V

Above their foreheads shone,
And trembled as they went,
A plumage woven of the firmament,
In color like a dreadful crystal stone.
The clamor of their wings surpassed
The noise of waters vast,
The roar of rivers downward driven,
The shout of billows tempest-riven.

VI

I saw them fly
Athwart the earth's dominions,
Till suddenly, above the sky,
A mighty voice resounded;
Whereon they drooped their pinions
And stood with faces turned on high
Like creatures all confounded
Because of some great glory nigh.

VII

Then, far beyond unaided ken,
Appeared a blinding sapphire throne,
Whereon sate One, sublime, alone,
In fashion like the sons of men.

The Scroll of Retribution.

I saw the great and holy One,
In fashion like a man divine,
Devised of amber wondrous fine,
And filled with flamings like the sun.

Around him bright apparel blew,
Of mingled color, stain on stain,
Like to the bow that follows rain
Because Jehovah's word is true.

Then falling on my face, I heard
A thunder far above my head,
A voice of thunderings that said,
"Arise and listen to my word.

"Arise and listen, son of man!
I send thee to an evil race
That scorns and ever scorned my grace,
Since first its little life began.

"Their utterance is full of stings,
Their looks are sharper than a spear;
Yet, even though they will not hear,
Proclaim the burden of these things."

Then, reaching through the cloven skies,
A hand, resplendent, swiftly stole,
That held the seeming of a roll
And opened it before my eyes.

I looked upon the roll, and lo
'Twas written close on either side;
Yet naught was written there beside
Lamenting, mourning, wail and woe.

The Burden of Tyre.

O island city, throning high
Beside the gate of many seas,
Your tribute comes on every breeze
From lands beyond the circled sky.

It comes in many a galleon
Whose rowers toil on ivory seats,
While blue and purple broidered sheets
Curve out from masts of Lebanon.

For you the Persians bend the bow,
The Gammadim uplift the spear,
The helms of Lybia sparkle clear,
The shields of Lud and Arvad glow.

Your markets echo back the fume
Of merchants come from many a land
Beyond the wilderness of sand,
Beyond the wilderness of spume.

Your stalls abound in precious wares:
Judea's olives, balm and grain;
The robes that Syrian maidens stain;
The gleaming ore that Tarshish bears;

The wool of Kedar's sable tents;
Togarmah's steeds and Javan's swords;
The bars of Ophir's aureate hoards;
The spice of Sheba and the scents.

The merchants of a hundred isles
Have made you perfect, full of grace;
The earth is dazed before your face,
The sea entangled by your wiles.

"But you shall perish," saith the Lord;
"Your glories wither like to flowers:—
Behold I bring against your towers
The King of Kings, the orient horde.

"The king of Babylon shall raise
His mound against your high estate;
His cars shall clash beneath your gate,
His horsemen slay along your ways.

"The isles shall tremble at your fall,
Your sailors stand afar and cry,
And fishers spread their nets to dry
Where beetled once your lordly wall."

The Burden of Babylon.

A noise of steeds and battle-cars!
The Lord of battles calls his bands;
They come from far and foreign lands,
From kingdoms known to alien stars.

The mountains echo back the tread
And shout of nations drawing nigh;
A dust of peoples palls the sky,
As though the sun and moon were dead.

The wicked perish in their wrong,
The arrogance of nobles pales,
The valiant utter woman wails,
The arrow smiteth through the strong.

And glorious, queenly Babylon,
The beauty of Chaldean pride,
Shall be as when Gomorrah died
By Sodom's side in ages gone.

While God remembereth her sin
No people there may build and breed,
Nor Arab tether there his steed,
Nor shepherd fold his flock within;

But all the desert creatures there
Shall habit; bodeful monsters call;
The vulture flap from hall to hall;
The satyr dance in temples bare.

In ruined palaces and towers
Shall wail the daughters of the owl,
And slimy dragons crawl and howl
Where lofty gardens hung their bowers.

Her doom is near. O judgment day!
O day of vengeance, when the Lord
Shall lift the bow of Media's horde
And Marduk fall to long decay!

The Feast of Bel.

The golden king Belshazzar
Was full of joy and boast
Because his walls and warriors
Withstood the Persian host.
"Behold," he cried, "my people,
Your God hath served you well;
So keep ye fair and debonair
The feast of Marduk Bel."

Then all the Chaldees triumphed
With pipe and dance and song;
From golden wine to golden shrine
They reeled in bacchant throng;
The captains o'er the turrets
Were daft with drink and mirth;
The warders 'neath the portals
Lay prone along the earth.

Belshazzar also reveled
Within his marble hall;
He gathered there his damozels,
His queen, his sons and all.
A hundred score of nobles
Caroused before his face,
While dancers wheeled and cornets pealed
And incense filled the place.

And when his heart was merry
With song and jest and tale,
And when his magicians anthemed
“O Lord Merodach, hail!”
He bade to bring each holy thing
That Zion used of old,
The candlesticks and vessels
Of argent, bronze and gold.

He bade to fill the goblets
In honor of the fanes
Where Babel's myriads worshipped
And Judah served in chains.
They brought the sacred beakers,
They brimmed them and they quaffed
While priest and knave and lord and slave
Exalted Bel and laughed.

But even while they jested
The king beheld a hand
Against the stone above his throne
Where ghost alone might stand;—

A hand! no other presence!
An awful hand! alone!
That scored the alabaster
With writing all unknown.

He saw it bright and blinding,
He saw the fingers gleam;
They traced their mystic message
And vanished like a dream;
But there, distinct, unfading,
Remained the occult words
Above the king's pavilion-rings,
Where none might reach but birds.

Then changed Belshazzar's visage;
It shook from chin to hair.
His lips were dry and ashen,
His eyes were all a-stare.
And like to him his nobles
Uplifted brows of gloom,
For well they spied those lines abide,
And guessed a coming doom.

"Ye priests, ye seers, ye sages!"
The monarch shrieked at last;
"Ye dolts who search the welkins,
Why sit ye there aghast?
Whatever man may open
This secret thing, shall hold
The third high place of royal grace
And wear the chain of gold."

Yet none divined the writing,
They stared with stifled breath;
And there was such a silence
As chills the caves of death,
Until the queen stood forward
Where crouched the king in fear,
And calmly said, "Be comforted!
The man ye need is here."

"Hast thou forgotten Daniel,
The seer of ancient fame
Who sate before thy father's door
And sentenced in his name?
His God hath made him cunning
In omen, dream and sign;
So let thy heralds call him
To read the mystic line."

Thereon the holy prophet
Was brought, and thus the king:
"The gods are with thee, Daniel,
To teach thee everything;
They give thee magian wisdom
To render dreams and seize
The hidden light of second sight
And show the dark decrees.

"And now behold this message
Which came, I know not whence.
If thou hast power to solve it
And tell its fearful sense,

Then shalt thou wear the scarlet
In Marduk's wide domain
And ride in state from gate to gate
And bear the golden chain."

"O king," replied the Hebrew,
"To others be thy meed.
Yet will I read the riddle
And show the things decreed.
O king! the king, the mighty king,
Thy father, ruled the earth
Until he turned from Yahveh
Who gave him birth and worth.

"Then Yahveh veiled his glory,
And drove him forth from men
To herd with humble cattle
And share their food and pen,
Until he knew his error
In lowliness and tears
And worshipped One who rules alone,
Enthroned upon the years.

"But thou hast scoffed at warning
And walked in froward ways;
To Him who gave thee empire
Thou hast not given praise;
And now, behold, thou bringest
The spoils of Zion's shrine
To pour therein for Baals of sin
Thine offerings of wine.

"Therefore the Lord appointed
 This hand to write thy fate;
The words are words of number,
 Of measure and of weight.
Thy sceptred years are counted,
 Thy merit strikes the beam,
Thy fair domain is torn in twain,
 The Persian comes supreme."

Then said the king, "O princes,
 This Hebrew bodeth ill;
But lo, my word is given,
 And kings their word fulfill.
Put on the golden girdle,
 Put on the scarlet gown,
Proclaim him third in Babel's herd
 And lead him through the town."

Now if he spake in earnest,
 Or wrath, or mirthful scorn,
What man could tell who liveth,
 Or ever yet was born?
For even while he mumbled
 The bacchant words ye know,
He slept the sleep that bibbers keep,
 Nor ever babbled moe.

For El deboshed our tyrants,
 The king and all his sons,
The princes, lords and magians,
 The chiefs, the mighty ones;

He gave them wine of slumber
That they might drowse and die;
That none might rise, or ope his eyes
Till shouting death were nigh.

No warder hears a larum,
No captain lifts his head,
The while a Persian army
Descends the river bed;
And when they wake, their vision
Is dim with trickling gore,
And through the maze of Babel's ways
Dart foemen smiting sore.

Hot herald runs to herald,
Post panteth on to post,
To wake the fated monarch
Who dreams amid his host;
Through many streets their panic fleets,
Through spacious courts they wend
To tell him that his city
Is taken at one end;

To tell him that his warriors
Are palsied with affright,
And all the postern outlets
Are stopped against his flight;
To bid him break from slumber
And rise in lion mood
To crush the foe, or fighting go
To death, as monarchs should.

But vainly rode the heralds;
The chasers followed nigh,
And king Belshazzar started
From dreaming but to die.
Great Babylon was hurtled
Like Lucifer to Hell;
Her Nebo bowed in ruin loud
Beside her fallen Bel.

The spoilers were upon her,
They breached her mountain walls,
They brake her brazen portals,
They burned her ivory halls.
In vain her dwellers labored
To quench her funeral pyre;
Her anguish rose in tossing throes
Of all-including fire.

A scream of woman's terror,
A howl of man's despair,
Fulfilled the golden city
From blazing square to square;
The slain of many peoples
Ensanguined all her ways
And redly dyed her arrowy tide
For woful days and days.

Thus God repaid to Babel
The havoc she had hurled
Against our lovely Zion,
The jewel of His world;

And ever may His fury
 Remain upon the spot
 Till Babel's might is wrapped in night,
 And Babel's name forgot.

Lucifer.

How hath the strong oppressor ceased
 Who smote the lands with tireless stroke!
 Yea, he who held the earth in yoke,
 The golden city of the East.

Hell rose to meet thy coming tread;
 It stirred the ghostly ones for thee;. .
 They scoffed, Art thou become as we?
 Behold, like us thou liest dead!

Thy pomp is humbled in the dust;
 Thy viols hush their cheerful noise;
 The worm is underneath thy joys
 And overlays thine every lust.

O Lucifer! O son of morn!
 How art thou fallen from thy state!
 How art thou vanquished, desolate,
 Who trode the sons of men in scorn!

For God remembereth thy boast:
 Thou saidst, "I will ascend on high,
 And build my throne amid the sky
 Above Jehovah's starry host."

Thy purpose was to overstride
The cloudy heights of seraphim,
And reign confederate with Him
Whose years eternally abide.

But thou art fallen unto night;
And they who look upon thee there
Shall scan thee with a narrow stare,
As doubting if they see aright;

And say, "Is this the mighty one
Who filled the nations with distress
And made the world a wilderness,
Nor ever let the captive run?"

Lo, many kings of many lands
Sleep grandiose in royal tombs,
Nor know amid their tranquil glooms
The cruel scorn of spoiling hands.

But thou art cast apart like those
Who lie unburied on the field
Where all their might and valor reeled
To death amid triumphant foes.

Appeal.

Oh that Thou mightest rend the skies,
Yea, part the welkin and descend,
While all the mountain summits bend
And melt before Thine awful eyes!

Behold, we are unclean within,
Our righteous deeds are rags and grime;
And like the leaves of winter time
We drive before the storms of sin.

Yea, none invokes Thy mighty name,
Or riseth up to crave thy grace;
And thou hast turned away thy face,
Or answered with consuming flame.

Yet Thou art father of us all,
And rulest man with perfect sway;
Thou art the maker, we the clay,
And thou canst bid us stand or fall.

Remember not our deeds of ill,
And be not angry very sore;
Though justice slay us evermore,
Behold, we are Thy children still.

Our hallowed city is destroyed,
Our fathers' land a desert land;
Yea, Zion's broken turrets stand
In regions desolate and void.

Our beautiful and holy fane,
Where Judah worshipped thee of old,
We saw its golden cloisters rolled
In flamings, while we wept in vain.

Wilt Thou forget our many tears?
Wilt Thou forego Thy chastenings?
Return, O Lord, on mercy's wings,
And bring again the gracious years!

Hope in Sorrow.

Behold me, the man who hath known
Affliction and scorning;
I wander in darkness alone
And find not the morning.

The hand of Jehovah is turned
Against me forever;
He heareth me not, he hath spurned
My prayer and endeavor.

And yet His compassions are sure
And new every morrow;
Or how should we ever endure
The arrows of sorrow?

Oh, well for a man that he grieve
While yet he is youthful;
Yea, well that he calmly believe
In Him who is truthful.

He sitteth in silence profound,
Rememb'ring his punishment;
He boweth his mouth to the ground,
Accepting admonishment.

He giveth his cheek unto him
Who executes sentence;
His spirit is filled to the brim
With trustful repentance.

For God will redeem us at last,
Though sorely He chasten;
His anger will quickly be past,
His mercies will hasten.

He hates not the children of dust,
To cause them to perish;
And though his resentment be just,
He yearneth to cherish.

The Promise.

O elders of a wicked land,
O people born in evil coasts,
I weary, saith the Lord of Hosts,
Of incense waved by sinner's hand.

I weary of the blood of beasts,
The blackened altars crowned with flame,
The loud hosannas to my name,
The sabbaths, moons and stated feasts.

Your lifted hands I hold abhorred,
So full are they of blood and snares;
Yea, when ye make your many prayers,
I will not hear them, saith the Lord.

Behold, your land is desolate,
Your cities crumbled, wall and tower;
The stranger sits within your bower
And eats the fruit your fathers ate.

Go wash you; make you white as snow;
Forsake your refuges of lies;
Deal justly; hear the widow's cries;
Console the orphan in his woe.

Repent; tread softly; walk in fears;
Pray meekly in your secret place;
Seek naught beside your Maker's grace;
And seek that carefully with tears.

So shall your princes rule anew,
Your counsellors arise from death;
I promise it, Jehovah saith,
And all my promises are true.

The Revival.

The Mighty One put forth his hand
And bore me to the vale of bones,
Uncountable as mountain stones
And dry as burning desert sand.

"O son of man," he said to me,
"Can these be ever made to rise
Anew in gracious human guise?"—
I answered, "It is known to thee."

Then bade He, "Prophesy and say,
Arise, O skeletons, and live;
And I, the Maker, I will give
Again the life I took away."

According to His word I cried,
Whereon a shaking filled the vale,
A tremor dry as rattling hail,
While murmurs ran from side to side.

From side to side the murmurs ran,
And lo, the bones together drew,
Together closed, together grew,
Till every heap became a man.

Yea, warriors lay in thousands there,
As warriors lie along the field,
The stiffened arm within the shield,
The visage white, the eyes a-stare.

Then said He, "Prophesy again;
Uplift the hand and prophesy;
Command the winds of every sky
To breathe upon these many slain."

Thereon I summoned, "Come, O breath!
From all the sides of heaven, come!
Inspire the armies of the dumb!
Arouse the companies of death!"

They stirred; they lifted up the head;
In awful lines of war they stood,
A mighty, living multitude
Who knew not they were ever dead.

Then said He: "Thus will I revive
The vanished ones of Israel;
Yea, I will gather them from Hell
And make their very slain alive."

The Return.

Thus saith the Gracious One: Behold,
I bring again my chosen race
To find the father's dwelling place
And rest within the ancient fold.

I gather them from every land,
The hoary sire, the valiant one,
The mother and her little son,
The lame, the blind, a mingled band.

With supplications, moans and tears,
A hallowed, meek array, they come;
And I will lead them to their home
In ways devoid of snares and fears.

My holy city shall arise
Upon the remnant of her wall,
And every turret, gate and hall
Exult anew where ruin lies.

Thanksgiving, praise and holy song
Will echo there; the dulcimer
And tabret set the heart astir;
The dancers wheel in happy throng.

Her multitude will live anew,
Her kings revive the perfect days,
Her temple ring again with praise,
Because my promises are true.

Reëstablishment.

Thus saith the Lord of mercies : Lo,
I bring again the captive host
Of Judah from the heathen coast
To build anew the long-ago.

I wash away their many sins,
I pardon every evil thought,
Although against my law they wrought
And pierced my love with keen chagrins.

The many tribes of earth shall fear
Because I lift my children up,
Because I fill their humble cup
So full of comforting and cheer.

Again, yet once again, this land
Of sunny mountain, fruitful vale,
Refreshed by humid western gale,
Yet barren now as desert sand;

This ravined land, devoid of life,
Will see the shepherd fold his sheep
And number them in holy sleep,
Secure from bloody sons of strife.

Again, yet once again, this place,
This Zion, stripped of man and brute,
These dwellings desolate and mute
This temple smitten to its base,

Shall hear the bridegroom and the bride
The gladsome noise of dance and game,
The psalm of those who praise my name,
Because my promises abide.

THE NEW GLORY



THE NEW GLORY.

The Man of Sorrows.

He hath no form nor comeliness
Nor beauty in our sinful eyes;
We look upon him and despise
A visage marred by long distress.

A man of sorrows, known to grief,
We would not take him into grace;
We hid our faces from his face,
And when he pleaded we were deaf.

We thought him stricken of the Lord;
We judged him worthy taunt and blow;
Yet surely he had borne our woe
And been because of us abhorred.

For our transgression was He slain,
And bruised for our iniquity;
Because of Him we do not die,
Nor suffer any stripe of pain.

Like foolish sheep we went astray,
We wandered each his wayward path;
But He alone endured the wrath
Of Him who hates the sinner's way.

Afflicted, smitten, bleeding, torn,
He opened not his mouth to weep,
But patient suffered like the sheep
Who moaneth not when he is shorn.

Because He gave his soul to death,
Because he bare the sins of earth,
The world at last shall know his worth
And praise Him to its latest breath.

The Fathers.

The time would fail to tell of those
Who wrought the wondrous deeds of faith;
Who kept their crowns despite of skaith,
And ran their course through many woes;

Who quenched the violence of fire,
And 'scaped the sharpness of the sword;
Who turned to flight the alien horde,
And quelled the lion in his ire;

Of mothers who received their dead,
Through fervent prayer, to life again;
Of men who suffered mortal pain,
Nor ever for deliverance plead;

Or those who fronted scourge and scorn
And biting bonds without regret,
Because their holy thoughts were set
Upon the resurrection morn;

While others, hunted, destitute,
Sought refuges in mountain caves,
Or found their nameless, noble graves
Among the coverts of the brute;

Unspotted souls of whom the earth
Was undeserving, though they strove
To lift it on their mighty love
And give its dust some little worth.

All these, whose gracious names endure,
Saw not the Christ that we have seen,
But kept their hallowed hope serene
Because they held the promise sure.

The Heralds.

I saw the seraph seven who stand
Before the awful throne of light,
Each one arrayed in blinding white,
Each one a trumpet in the hand.

An eighth beside the altar came
And waved a golden censer high,
Whose incense sweetened all the sky,
As though the sun were fragrant flame.

Therewith he offered up the prayers
Of that innumerable throng
Who fought against the sires of wrong
And quelled the princes of the airs.

Next, taking from the altar hearth
A censer full of ruddy fire,
He lifted it in holy ire
And cast it o'er the trembling earth.

Then lightnings every whither went,
Incessant thunderings were hurled,
And earthquakes tottered round the world,
While answered voices of lament.

Thereon the herald seven arose
And blew their trumpets one by one,
Fulfilling earth and moon and sun
With desolations, dooms and woes;

Till presently, on sea and shore,
Another angel stood alone,
Who pointed to the judgment throne
And swore that time should be no more.

The Golden City.

The elder firmament and earth
Had passed away in awful flame;
Thereon another welkin came,
Another world received its birth.

Then, looking up, I saw descend
The Golden City, strong and high,
Yet clear as crystal to the eye,
Transparent gold from end to end.

Its walls were jasper, standing on
A plinth of onyx, chrysolite,
Of jacinth, beryl, sapphire bright,
Sard, amethyst and chalcedon.

From pearly portals argentine
Immeasurable streets unrolled,
With pavements wrought of solid gold,
Yet amber-clear like golden wine.

No temple was there in the place,
No heavenly luminary shone;
The fane thereof is God alone,
The sun thereof, Jehovah's face.

Then, far above all mortal ken,
I heard a mighty voice proclaim :
"Forever holy be His name !
God cometh down to dwell with men.

"He comes to wipe away their tears,
To give the stricken ones relief ;
Yea, death shall be no more, nor grief,
Nor any mourning, pain, or fears."

Then God upon His throne replied :
"Behold I make creation new !
These promises are faithful true ;
So write, and let my words abide !"

The White Robed.

I saw in wonder-dreams of slumber
A mighty, mingled multitude
Of every region, tongue and brood,
Too infinite for man to number.

With waving palms, arrayed in brightness,
And sounding golden harps, they choired
Round One, in jasper bloom attired,
Who sate a throne of blinding whiteness.

Then spake an elder clothed in glory:
“What men are these in robes of snow?”
I answered: “How may sinner know?
Thou knowest, Lord, their hallowed story.”

He said: “Behold the sons of noyance
Who kept the faith in weary stress,
Nor ever trusted God the less
Because they found no earthly joyance;

“Wherefore the gracious One, the tender
Redeemer, wiped away their tears,
And lifted them to astral spheres
To share His perfect love and splendor.”



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